

FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSICAL ART  
VOLUME 13  
BEETHOVEN AND THE  
ROMANTIC SYMPHONY



WENTZ  
GANTON MUSIC SERIES



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# FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSICAL ART

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VOLUME THIRTEEN



# FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSICAL ART

IN TWENTY VOLUMES

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## TITLES OF VOLUMES

- I. INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC
- II. THE FOLK SONG AND DANCE
- III. THE ART SONG AND ITS COMPOSERS
- IV. THE GROWTH AND USE OF HARMONY
- V. THE ART OF LISTENING
- VI. CHORAL MUSIC AND THE ORATORIO
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- XX. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND INDEX

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# FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSICAL ART

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EDWARD DICKINSON, Litt.D., *Editor-in-Chief*

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VOLUME

THIRTEEN

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## BEETHOVEN AND THE ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

By

DAVID ERIC BERG



THE CAXTON INSTITUTE

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NEW YORK

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The colophon of the Caxton Institute used on our cover and title page represents *Yggdrasil*, which according to Norse mythology is a mighty ash tree supporting the whole universe. It symbolizes Existence, and is the Tree of Life, Knowledge and Fate.



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# BEETHOVEN AND THE ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

## I

### CHARACTER AND TEMPERAMENT

**B**EETHOVEN is the Shakespeare of music. As Shakespeare in literature, so Beethoven in music dramatized the profoundest depths and heights of the human heart and mind. Whatever were the actual details of the life of the almost legendary bard of Avon, of Beethoven we have the authentic record of a life's span crowded to the bursting point with dramatic incidents and intense emotions. The swift and repeated oscillations from the most sublime pinnacles of joy to the most abject depths of misery and despair, were alternated by moments of the tenderest and most human contacts and joys.

A squalid and brutal childhood environment, a stormy, unyielding nature, a soft, easily betrayed heart, an inveterate carelessness in financial affairs, extreme slovenliness in dress and manners, an impatient arrogance in the treatment of others, a constant victim of

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

insufferable dyspepsia, and most cruel of all, his devastating deafness, constituted the major causes of Beethoven's appalling flood of misery and torture.

But this unhappy condition was further aggravated by the titantic tortures of his soul in its agonized quest for God and the answer to this enigma of life. In Beethoven, a spirit of immense power, was dramatized that desperate struggle of the individual to find and make its peace with God. In a nature of Beethoven's enormous virility, profound breadth, and exquisite sensibility, this soul-drama takes on a universal significance. It is the masterly delineation of these vivid internal upheavals that explains the power and durability of Beethoven's works.

Like some gigantic moral figure of an ancient Greek drama the antique ethical nature of Beethoven breasts and defies the most frightful batterings of adverse fate. Grandly erect he remains, a tower of intellectual and moral strength, resisting firmly the insidious temptation of noble patronage, the whisper of sterilizing self-satisfaction, the abandonment to adulation, battling heroically against the discouragement of ill health and deafness.

In virility and ruggedness of character Beethoven is a veritable King Lear. Michael

## CHARACTER AND TEMPERAMENT

Angelo, J. Sebastian Bach, and Johannes Brahms are his spiritual brothers, and share with him that same solidity and masculinity. The most arresting quality in Beethoven's character is his compelling personal integrity and force. He was first of all a great man, faithfully fulfilling the laws of his own being. No misfortune, no handicap of environment, no disappointment or failure could dim that fiercely flaming spirit of confidence in his own genius, nor swerve him from that rigid devotion to the perfection of his art.

No ruler, aristocrat, or plutocrat ever regarded his especial distinction with more pride than Beethoven felt in his personal integrity and power. When he was suing Carl's mother for the custody of his nephew, he was asked if his "van" indicated nobility. "My nobility," he said, "is here and here," pointing to his head and heart. He preferred a payment of fifty ducats to a Prussian order for one of his works. He refused on one occasion, when out walking with Goethe, to take off his hat to the Imperial family which was passing, thereby demanding homage to the aristocracy of genius. "The nobility are good enough in their place," he once remarked, "but one must know how to impress them."

Biographers have recounted many instances



## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

of his truculent, often uncouth self-assertion, of his disregard of conventionality, his hatred of sham and artificial conditions, his absent-mindedness, impracticality, disorderliness, and erratic habits. Thus Carl Czerny, when a boy of ten, describes the disorderly state of his room: "In a very desolate room, with papers and articles of dress strewn in all directions, bare walls, a few chests, hardly a chair except the rickety one standing by the piano, there was a party of six or eight people. Dressed in a jacket and trousers of long, dark goat's hair, Beethoven looked like a Robinson Crusoe. He had not shaved for days, and had cotton wool, dipped in a yellow fluid, in his ears."

"In the summer of 1813," says Schindler, "he had neither a decent coat nor a whole shirt." His habit of splashing water over his head must have played havoc with his clothes. He tried to learn to dance, but couldn't succeed. His lack of manual skill was notorious; everything he touched he broke. At one time he spilled a bottle of ink into his grand piano. When he shaved, which was not very often, he would cut himself horribly.

His uncontrollable temper was notorious. At one time he lost patience with a waiter, arose from the table, and overturned a plateful of soup about his head. He treated his

## CHARACTER AND TEMPERAMENT

servants unceremoniously, once throwing the eggs at the cook because they were not fresh. At another time, when angry with Prince Lichnowsky, he returned home and dashed the bust of his friend to the floor and broke it to bits. Another friend, Prince Lobkowitz, offended Beethoven, whereupon he went into his court, shook his fist at him, and called Lobkowitz a "donkey." Equally aggravated was his absent-mindedness. A friend tells of his insisting on paying a waiter for a meal which he hadn't even ordered, merely having seated himself on a chair. He would often stand in front of a window in his nightshirt to shave, thereby attracting the attention of the passer-by.

The smallest things irritated him; so that he was continually moving his lodging to avoid petty annoyances, often merely to incur fresh ones more formidable. He was often curt and cutting in his retorts, wounding the feelings and alienating the affections of his best friends. Many of his peculiarities resulted from his deafness, and the inevitable morbidity associated with this malady. Imagine the lot of a composer who was doomed never to hear with his physical ears the sounds of his most sublime productions! His frequent spells of melancholia, irritability, and loss of temper

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

were aggravated by liver trouble, with consequent digestive disturbances.

Still these were merely surface qualities, which might have characterized any mediocre person afflicted with dyspepsia and an uncontrollable temper. It is only on penetrating deeper into his character that its distinctive qualities are discovered. In reading his letters to his friends, to Stephan Breuning, to old Neefe, to Ries, Wegeler, Giulietta, Bettina, Theresa, and especially to his luckless nephew, we discern the overflowing affection and kindness of Beethoven's heart. These letters reveal to us the true nobility of his spirit.

"Cyclopean masses of rock are hurled with cyclopean force," says Ludwig Nohl, editor of his letters, "but hard and massive as they are, the man is not to be envied whose heart is not touched by these glowing fragments, flung apparently at random right and left, like meteors, by a mighty intellectual being, however perverse the treatment language may have received from him."

He had the profoundest sympathy with the republican principles of the French Revolution and expressed his sympathy unreservedly before noble and lowly alike. He was a profound thinker and a keen psychologist. Copied out in his own handwriting and kept constantly

## EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

before him on his writing desk were the following sentences, said to be taken from the Egyptian Temple of Isis:

"I am that which is;

I am all that is, that was, and that shall be.

No mortal man has lifted my veil.

He proceeds from Himself alone, and to Him alone do all things owe their existence."

The shadows of his life were relieved by many sketches of brilliant light. A rich, glorious unfoldment of powers that culminated in a magnificent crescendo of attainment, his acknowledged personal worth, his many triumphs as composer and piano virtuoso, the never ceasing friendship and association of the elect of Vienna, the appreciation and consolation of the greatest writers and minds of all times, and a passionate love for external Nature, offered substantial citadels against the assaults of ill fortune.

## EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Ludwig van Beethoven was born on December 16, 1770, in a squalid little attic of a

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

humble dwelling in Bonn, a small university town on the Rhine near Cologne. Ludwig came of rugged Flemish stock. His grandfather, after whom he was named, had been born in Antwerp and at the age of twenty had journeyed to Bonn, Germany, attracted there by the brilliant court maintained by the great art patron, Clement Augustus, Elector Archbishop of Cologne. Here the young Netherlander, with a good voice and a thorough musical grounding, made rapid headway and between 1732 and 1751 rose from the part of ordinary musician to that of Capellmeister. Only one dark shadow marred his complete happiness, and that was a strong propensity for drink which developed in his wife soon after he was married, and had started a small wine business. This taint appeared to have been communicated to their Johann, Ludwig's father, the only surviving son.

Johann's career was one of steady decline into abject degeneracy and poverty. In 1767, on a miserable salary of \$150 a year, earned as tenor in the Electoral Chapel, Johann proceeded to marry Marie Magdalena, a young widow, daughter of the head cook at the castle of Ehrenbreitstein (opposite Coblenz), who was an honest, kindly woman. Of his mother Beethoven always spoke kindly and feelingly.



## EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

The old Capellmeister was enraged at this unequal marriage and turned his son out of his own home.

The first son of this union, Ludwig Maria, born the preceding year, lived only six days. After the composer Ludwig (the second child) came Caspar Anton Carl (1774), Nicholas Johann (1776) and August Granz Georg (1781). The youngest died in early childhood, but the other two brothers lived to exercise a sinister influence over their illustrious brother. Two sisters, one of whom lived only four days, were born later. Without the help of the old Capellmeister, the household would have fared ill. When his death occurred just before Ludwig was three years old, poverty and misery became permanent guests, and ended the happy childhood days of Ludwig. The father's dissipations became worse, and he soon spent the small fortune left by the grandfather.

Johann, the father, noticing Ludwig's musical ability, conceived the idea of transforming him into a musical prodigy to exploit his talents. He proceeded almost to kill the child with overwork, compelling uninterrupted practice during the time not actually spent in the public school. A remorseless round of clavier and violin practice took the place of a child's

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

normal play. Tears and fatigue did not soften the father's heart.

At nine years of age Ludwig was placed under charge of a tenor singer in the Bonn opera house, named Tobias Pfeiffer, who proved kindly and capable and quite won the heart of his pupil. Beethoven stated later that "he had learned more from him than from anyone else," and sent him money for his necessities in his old age. The discipline continued to be severely Spartan, nevertheless, for often after a drinking bout the father and teacher would return home, drag the lad out of bed, and compel him to practice till daybreak. The rod was not spared. The wonder is that they didn't kill their poor pupil. But their immense pains produced excellent results. At an age when most prospective musicians were struggling with technical difficulties, Ludwig had mastered them and was trying to express his own musical thoughts. When Ludwig played the clavier and Pfeiffer the flute together, the people on the streets would stop to listen to the lovely music.

At seven years of age (his father advertised him as six and thereby confused Beethoven as to his real age until he was forty years old), Ludwig had performed a concert program, playing several concertos. At ten years of

## EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

age, the family deemed him ready for a tour in Holland. His mother and Ludwig set out, but the profits must have been small, for the youthful performer stated: "The Dutch are a niggardly set; I shall never visit Holland again."

At this time he commenced the study of the organ with Brother Willibald, at a nearby Franciscan monastery, and soon acquired such mastery that he was able to act as assistant organist at church service. The old electoral court organist and his successor, Christian Gottlob Neefe, also contributed to his early musical education. Neefe, especially, was an able musician, severely trained in the North German style, and of broad general culture, to whose influence Beethoven gives due credit, writing Neefe: "If I should turn out some day to be a great man, you will have contributed to making me such."

At the age of eleven, such was Beethoven's proficiency that Neefe was able to appoint him substitute during a trip to the Elector's palace at Münster, and pave the way to become court organist later! Neefe furnished the first published account of Beethoven, and from him we learn of the latter's mastery of the difficult "*Well Tempered Clavichord*," of J. S. Bach, which marked the beginning of Beethoven's

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

profound admiration of the elder master. Karl P. E. Bach's and Muzio Clementi's sonatas were also mastered. During this period were published the first of Beethoven's works, "*Variations on a March of Dressler*" in C minor, three Sonatas for the Pianoforte, and a Funeral Cantata, which has been lost. The latter was written and performed in memory of Mr. Cressener, English Chargé d'Affaires at Bonn, whose appreciation of the boy's genius took the practical form of a gift of 400 florins.

Strong proof of the high estimation of his talents is afforded by the fact that at the age of twelve years and four months he was appointed cembalist, *i.e.*, pianist, in the orchestra of the newly organized opera house. It was during these malleable years that Beethoven, whose duties consisted in presiding at the piano during rehearsals, played at sight from scores while operas by Gluck, Salieri, Sarti, and Paisiello were produced, obtained his profound insight into the resources of the orchestra and also laid the foundation of his phenomenal command of the keyboard.

The death, in April, 1784, of Elector Max Friedrich brought a stop to the scheme for the National Opera House and the dismissal of the whole theatrical company. Beethoven was forced to resort to teaching, an irksome and

## THE FIRST VISIT TO VIENNA

ill paid task. But the accession of the brilliant young prince, Max Franz, a gifted and cultivated son of Maria Theresa of Austria, to the vacant office infused new life and increased the splendor of the court. Beethoven became organist jointly with his teacher, Neefe, at a salary of \$75 a year, a decided improvement over his previous appointment, which had carried no remuneration. It was at this time that Beethoven succeeded in winning a bet from a vocalist named Heller, by confusing his ears through a series of bold modulations. A squabble resulted in which the Elector himself was asked to interfere, who, learning the facts of the case, severely admonished Beethoven not to repeat such strokes of genius.

## THE FIRST VISIT TO VIENNA

Then in 1787, at the age of seventeen, Beethoven's glowing dream of visiting Vienna was realized. There he met Mozart, then a man thirty-one years of age. The interview occurred at a musical gathering, and Mozart, who had had his fill of "boy-wonders," was not particularly impressed. Mozart applauded mechanically after the conventional show pieces had been played, but when Beethoven



## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

began to extemporize upon a given theme, Mozart changed his tone and commended generously. Later in an adjoining room he said to some of his friends: "Pay heed to this youth, one of these days he will make a noise in the world."

Mozart found time to give Beethoven a few lessons, which did not appear to have impressed his pupil greatly. He was also introduced to the Emperor Francis Joseph, and the summer passed delightfully. In the early fall news reached him that his mother was dying of consumption. After borrowing about \$15, Beethoven started on his sad journey back to Bonn. He was much depressed after her death. The death in November of his year-old sister Margaretha deepened his sorrow. Since the pitiful stipend of his father of \$150 a year had to be increased to keep the household together, Beethoven was compelled to turn his attention from his beloved study and composition to the grind of teaching.

### FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Even these disheartening days had their consolation, for through two of his pupils, Lenz and Elenore von Bruening, he became a fast friend and welcome guest of the family.

## FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Madame Bruening, a widow of a Councilor of State, took a fancy to the uncouth young lad, and made her home a veritable haven for him. This intimate association with a refined and cultured family and their friends exercised a profound influence on the young man. Under the gentle guidance of Madame Bruening Beethoven became acquainted with the best products of literature. Voss's translation of the *Odyssey*, the works of Lessing, Klopstock, Gleim, and the early productions of Goethe, as well as German versions of Shakespeare and Sterne, were avidly devoured. These were the beginnings of a lifetime's earnest study of the works of great writers.

Madame Bruening, deeply appreciative of the rugged worth and the sensitive nature of the youth, treated him as a beloved son. She exercised a gentle power over the restive, morbid youth, for a word from her sufficed to quiet his most turgid moods. Beethoven has had a "raptus," she would explain, after a particularly violent outburst. These were golden days for Beethoven, when he obtained rich food for his starved and thwarted spirit. This association was incalculably valuable, for without it, that great upwelling fount of love and sympathy which makes Beethoven's music so moving, might have been dried up at its

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

source, and only bitterness, cynicism, and morbidity would have occupied his heart.

Another friend of inestimable value was the cultivated and generous nobleman, Count Waldstein, an enthusiastic amateur of music who was staying at Bonn previous to his admission into the Teutonic order of which Max Franz was Grand Master. His genial companionship and exquisite taste could not fail to improve Beethoven's personal address and qualities, and the Count's huge admiration for the young musician took a very practical turn, for he presented him with a fine piano, and through the Elector, under the guise of allowances, furnished him with much needed funds.

Waldstein would often visit Beethoven in his shabby room, to listen to the young musician play and improvise, and would advise and encourage him. At the suggestion of Waldstein in 1790, Beethoven composed the "*Ritter Ballet*" for a *bal masqué*, which the Count planned to give early the following year. This was performed as planned and for awhile Waldstein was credited with the music. Fifteen years later Beethoven gave proof of his appreciation and regard for the Count by dedicating to him the masterly Sonata, Op. 53, thus immortalizing the name of Waldstein.

## THE ELECTOR'S ORCHESTRA

These were cheering influences to a nineteen-year-old youth, who had been entrusted with the guardianship of his family. His father, because of his impossible habits, had been legally removed from authority. His brother Carl was set to work studying music, and Johann was apprenticed to an apothecary.

### THE ELECTOR'S ORCHESTRA

For some years after his short visit to Vienna, Beethoven had been violinist in the orchestra of the Elector's opera house. His associates were musicians of ripe culture: Andreas Bernhard Romberg, and Anton Reicher, afterwards famed as a theorist. At his elbow was his youthful friend, Stephan Breuning. Here appeared actors who later became famous throughout all Germany. Works of every description were produced: Martin's "*Tree of Diana*," Mozart's "*Elopement from the Seraglio*," Salieri's "*Grotto Trophonius*," Dittersdorf's "*Doctor and Apothecary*" and "*Little Red Riding Hood*," Gluck's "*Pilgrim of Mecca*," besides Paisiello's "*King Theodore*," and, most significant of all, Mozart's "*Don Giovanni*" and "*Marriage of Figaro*." Invaluable to Beethoven was the constant observance of "character in tone," for it was just

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

this remarkable capacity to dramatize the most intimate personal emotions that immortalized his works. At this time, even when improvising, he was continually requested to describe the character of some well-known person.

One distinguishing quality of the Bonn orchestra was its attention to musical light and shade, that is, the subtle nuances of *forte* and *piano*, introduced by a former Capellmeister, Mathioli, "a man full of fire and learning," who had learned orchestral management from Gluck, and who was by many deemed superior to Cannabich of Mannheim. Mathioli was succeeded by Joseph Reicha, who brought the Bonn orchestra to its highest pitch of excellence and acknowledged reputation.

Under such inspiring leadership and association with the finest of artists, Beethoven learned many a lesson in orchestration. No more valuable environment could have been discovered for the training of the future symphonic master, for here he learned those innumerable subtleties and details of performance which could be absorbed only through the experience of rehearsal and finished performance with a fine orchestra. He also so perfected his own technic of the violin that a contemporary writer praises him for his individual style of expression: "I found him



## THE ELECTOR'S ORCHESTRA

wanting in nothing which goes to make the great artist. All superior players of the orchestra are his admirers. They are all ears when he plays, but the man himself is exceedingly modest and without pretension of any kind." This speaks well for the youth of twenty years.

In 1790, Haydn, accompanied by the famous English impresario Salomon, passed through Bonn on his way to London. In 1792, on his return journey, the musical people of Bonn were again stirred by Haydn's visit to their city. The Elector's orchestra planned a dinner at Godesberg in honor of the illustrious musician. Here Beethoven had an opportunity of submitting to him an unfinished cantata, composed on the death of Emperor Joseph II. Haydn praised it warmly and urged Beethoven to continue his studies.

About this time the Elector appeared at last to have begun to appreciate the true merits of Beethoven. The constant commendations of Waldstein, the favorable comments of Haydn, and the outspoken admiration of his friends and associates prompted the Elector to take a step that completely revolutionized Beethoven's life. For years Beethoven had dreamed of returning to Vienna, but money troubles had prevented it. Now the Elector removed

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

this obstruction by granting Beethoven a small pension.

Happy as was Beethoven over his smiling prospects, his heart was touched with sadness at the thought of leaving his beloved friends and associates. Many hands were outstretched in loving farewell as soon as his impending leave-taking became known. Waldstein's parting words are historic: "You are now going to Vienna in fulfillment of your wish so long frustrated. The genius of Mozart still weeps and mourns the death of his pupil. He found an asylum but no employment in the inexhaustible genius of Haydn. Through him he now wishes to be united to some one else. Receive, through unbroken industry, from the hands of Haydn the spirit of Mozart." The names of all his dear friends were inscribed in an album which was jealously guarded by Beethoven all his life as one of the most precious mementos of his youth.

Early in November, 1792, Beethoven set forth to Vienna, passing the Hessian troops on their way to France. His departure was most opportune, for in a short time the Elector, his court, and the musicians and actors were dispersed by the onrushing waves of the French Revolution. In October the Revolutionary troops were threatening the Rhine,

## THE ELECTOR'S ORCHESTRA

and soon after the nobility and the wealthy packed up their belongings and left Bonn. A kindly fate had removed Beethoven from what would have been an impossible environment, to the most favorable in Europe.

At this juncture Beethoven was twenty-two years of age, adolescence was gone, he was entering early manhood. If we compare his achievements in composition with Mozart, Schubert, or Mendelssohn at the same age, we must admit that they are altogether insignificant. They consisted of the "*Ritter Ballet*," the "*Variations Vieni Amore*," a pair of funeral cantatas and a few trios. Mozart at that age had 300 important works to his credit! Beethoven cherished plans to compose Schiller's great "Ode to Joy," verse by verse, a project which was not fulfilled until thirty years later, when it appeared in the Finale of the "*Ninth Symphony*."

"It would be pleasant," writes Thayer, the author of Beethoven's monumental biography, "to announce the arrival of Ludwig van Beethoven in Vienna with, so to speak, a grand flourish of trumpets, and to indulge the fancy in a highly-colored and poetic account of his advent there; but unluckily, this was not the case. The facts are too patent. Like the multitude of studious youths and young men

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

who came thither annually to find schools and teachers, this small, thin, dark-complexioned, pock-marked, dark-eyed, bewigged young musician of twenty-two years had quietly journeyed to the capital to pursue the study of his art with a small, thin, dark-complexioned, pock-marked, black-eyed, and bewigged veteran composer [Haydn].”

### BEETHOVEN'S RECEPTION IN VIENNA

Unannounced and unexpected the young Beethoven slipped unobtrusively into the streets of Vienna and disappeared into his garret in the Alservorstadt, outside the fortification walls of proud Vienna.

Vienna, like Paris, was the center of the social life of its country. There nobles and princely clergy assembled in the winter time, together with their families and servants and also their court musicians, who furnished them with diversion in their secluded country palaces during the summer months. This demand prompted composers to write trios, quartets, and symphonic works to please their noble patrons. Public concerts as we know them to-day did not then exist in Vienna. Virtuosi and performers would appear in benefit concerts, of which four were given yearly in the Burg-

## BEETHOVEN'S RECEPTION IN VIENNA

theater, which seated about 1,100 persons. Otherwise secular music was heard solely in the salons of the noble and wealthy.

The Count Waldstein had armed Beethoven with a redoubtable arsenal of introductions, which almost immediately paved the way for his rapid recognition and acceptance into the homes of the most cultivated musical amateurs and patrons.

The first thing Beethoven did on arrival was to apply to Haydn for instruction in composition, as had been previously agreed upon. But their association did not prove a love-feast. Beethoven, proud, impatient, independent, and immensely original, could not bring himself to accept unquestioningly the dictates of the older man, who naturally clung to the established forms in which he was so well at home. Haydn in his turn was none too pleased with the insolence of his young pupil and nicknamed him the "Grand Mogul." Inestimable, however, was Haydn's service to Beethoven in directing his attention to the larger works of Handel and Bach. Their solidity and virility was entirely in keeping with the robust masculinity of Beethoven's own nature. Despite Beethoven's feeling that Haydn was not devoting sufficient care to the correction of his studies in counterpoint, their relations con-

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tinued until Haydn's second departure for England in 1794.

Schenk, a well-known Viennese composer, secretly supplemented Haydn's instruction. Beethoven accompanied Haydn to Eisenstadt, the summer residence of the Esterhazys, sometime in 1793. When Haydn left for England Beethoven instantly sought out Albrechtsberger for instruction in counterpoint, and Schuppanzigh for the violin. Beethoven, despite his headstrong nature, had the good sense to realize that he could not afford to neglect any opportunity to prepare himself for his cherished plans of composition. Strange to say, neither Haydn nor Albrechtsberger had any inkling of the true ability of their obstreperous pupil. "He has learned nothing; he never will learn anything," the latter announced. For Beethoven had stated that "it was good to know the rules so that one could break them."

A month had not elapsed after Beethoven's arrival in Vienna when he received news of his father's death, which meant the future care of his two younger brothers. Beethoven petitioned the Elector for a renewal of the pension of 100 thalers, which was granted, but discontinued the following October, 1794, when the French army drove him out of Bonn.

Prince Karl van Lichnowsky, who had be-



## BEETHOVEN'S RECEPTION IN VIENNA

friended Mozart, now threw the weight of his powerful influence to the support of young Beethoven. In 1794 the Prince invited him to stay at his home and paid him a yearly salary of 1,200 marks. The wife of the Prince, the Princess Christiane Thun, intellectual, charming, and talented musically, discerned the intrinsic worth of the still unpolished youth, and like Madame Bruening tolerated his outbursts and offered him tactful advice. Beethoven lived with the childless pair as a member of the family off and on for ten years, his only complaint being that he was too well watched over. "They wanted to train me with grandmotherly love," he remarked humorously, "and the princess would have liked to put me in a glass case that no evil might come nigh me." Even the ordinary routine of a fixed dinner hour irked their overbearing guest, who would often sally forth to partake of the coarser fare of a neighboring café.

Lichnowsky held quartet parties at his home every Friday at which Schuppanzigh, Sina, Weise, and Kraft performed. The Prince and Beethoven took seriously in hand the training of the young musicians, then called the Schuppanzigh, but later known as the Rasoumoffsky Quartet, which was destined to become the interpreter of the grandest examples

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

of this form from the pen of Beethoven.

His three trios, constituting Opus 1, composed in 1791-92, were dedicated to the Prince, and performed at his palace before a brilliant gathering. Amid a storm of applause Haydn stepped forward and warmly praised the first two trios, but recommended that the third should not be published, much to the disgust of Beethoven, who deemed that the best.

Among his many friends, the Baron van Swieten, son of Maria Theresa's favorite physician and formerly ambassador to the Prussian court, proved especially valuable. He had the choral works of Handel and Bach performed at his house on Sunday mornings, and also the less formidable works of other composers on other days. After the other guests had departed, Beethoven was often pressed by his host to remain and regale him with a half dozen of Bach's fugues. On one occasion the Baron wrote: "If nothing stands in the way, I should be glad to see you here next Wednesday at half past eight o'clock with your night-cap in your pocket."

The delicately perfumed Viennese beauties vied with each other in showering attentions upon the young lion, much to his dismay and damage to his peace of mind. They visited his lodgings, coaxed him to visit their homes,

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and besieged him to give them lessons. For Beethoven possessed a powerful fascination both for the members of the fairer sex and for men as well. His picturesque appearance, his leonine head and deep-set, flashing eyes, his proud bearing, keen intelligence, and pungent speech, and his incredible power of improvisation won him universal esteem and affection. Such adulation would have completely turned the head of a less rugged personality.

His impatience and rudeness would flash out frequently, however. At one time he even refused to play for the Countess Thun, the mother of the Prince Lichnowsky, despite the fact that she fell on her knees to entreat him as he lay on the sofa. At another time when he was playing a duet at the house of Count Browne a young nobleman and a young lady persisted in talking. Beethoven became enraged, lifted his pupil's hands from the keyboard, and said loudly: "I play no longer for such swine." Often he would storm at his young lady pupils, tear their music into shreds, and scatter it about the room. Singularly enough, these outbursts did not seem to make any breach in the esteem accorded him by the nobility with whom he mingled. Only the force of his genius could have managed to counteract such breaches of good form.

# BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

## EARLY SUCCESSES

A portrait by Guérin during this period shows Beethoven short, compact in physique, dark, with abundant hair, a broad, clean-shaven face, not handsome but of arresting power. His face is "rugged, almost savage and thwarted with ambition. Beethoven looks very young for his age, thin and straight, a defiant strained look in his eye, he knows his own worth and is confident of his power."<sup>1</sup>

In 1798 he wrote in his sketch-book: "Courage! Despite all my bodily weaknesses, my genius shall triumph! Twenty-five years, they have come to me, they are mine. This very year the man within me shall reveal himself completely!" In 1795 he had given his first public recital at the Burgtheater, a benefit affair, which included among other works a Pianoforte Concerto in C major. On this occasion Beethoven delayed the completion of the writing of his concerto until two days before the performance. A bad attack of colic was the cause. His friend, Dr. Wegeler, did his best to relieve the disorder. Beethoven finally set to work furiously, passing sheet after sheet as he finished to four copyists. At rehearsal it was discovered that the piano was

<sup>1</sup> Romain Rolland, "Beethoven." H. Holt & Co., New York.

## EARLY SUCCESSES

one-half a step lower than the orchestra. Beethoven without hesitation went to the piano and played the concerto in C sharp.

In 1796 Beethoven received a gracious reception from Frederick William II of Prussia, on a visit to Berlin, when he played his two sonatas for piano and 'cello before the court and received a snuffbox full of louis d'or. Beethoven was nevertheless disappointed in the musical situation at Berlin, for the Italian style still reigned supreme there. His visit to the Berlin Academy, where he met the Conductor Fasch and his successor Zelter, confirmed his suspicion of the dry-as-dust spirit of the place. He was quite content to return to Vienna and plan his activities with this city as his base.

The following year Beethoven, returning home one hot summer day, perspiring and almost overpowered by the heat, threw open doors and windows, took off his coat and vest, and sat down at the window to cool off. This was perhaps the most ill-fated day of his life. A dangerous illness resulted, an inflammation settling finally in his ears, which marked the beginning of the tragically culminating sequel, complete deafness. From this time on commenced the terrible struggle against despair and the surging revolt against the implacable

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power that had cursed him with this affliction, the most frightful that could come to a musician and composer.

Beethoven did not win his virtuoso spurs without some stiff competition. The two foremost competitors were Woelfl, long-fingered and master of a dazzling bravura style, and Steibelt, an equally showy prestidigitator. The contest with Woelfl came off at the house of his patron, Count Wetzlar, and resulted in an easy decision for Beethoven, Woelfl accepting his defeat gracefully. Not so with Steibelt, with whom the encounter did not come until 1800, when Steibelt returned fresh from his triumphs in Paris and Prague. They met by chance at the house of Count Fries, where Beethoven played for the first time his Trio in B Flat Major, Opus 16, for piano, clarinet, and 'cello. This work gave little chance for display, and Steibelt listened condescendingly for Beethoven to finish after he had played a quintet and improvised on its theme. Beethoven seemed rather overshadowed.

A week afterwards a second concert was given at the same place and Steibelt performed another quintet, and also a showy impromptu on the theme of the last movement of Beethoven's trio, much to the disgust of the composer and his friends. When it came Beetho-



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ven's turn he snatched up the 'cello part of Steibelt's quintet, placed it on the piano upside down, and picked off the opening theme with one finger. Growing excited, Beethoven improvised with such a dazzling display of power that before he had finished Steibelt had retired in confusion from the room.

Beethoven had meanwhile been busy with his compositions and by 1800 had produced a respectable quantity of works, about 20 opus numbers, which represented, however, only the very smallest fraction of what he was to achieve later. Among his works was his "*First Symphony in C Major*" dedicated to the Baron van Swieten and performed at a general public concert April 2, 1800, whose program included the following numbers: Symphony by Mozart, air from "*The Creation*" by Haydn, Grand Concerto for the Piano by Beethoven, Septet by Beethoven, duet from "*The Creation*," by Haydn, Improvisation by Beethoven on Haydn's "*Emperor's Hymn*," and the "*First Symphony*" by Beethoven. Its success was marked.

At this time Beethoven formed the habit, thenceforth adhered to, of moving out of the city to the country during the autumn, to the nearby village of Unter-Dobling, where in the same house lived a lawyer named Grillparzer,

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father of the famous dramatic poet. Madame Grillparzer incurred the wrath of the eccentric composer by being caught listening to confidences intended only for his piano. Beethoven refused to play after this, despite her promises that all eavesdropping would thenceforth cease. It was under such conditions that Beethoven indulged in his passionate love for Nature, and received some of his finest inspirations. Undoubtedly these surroundings were the stimuli for his wonderful "*Pastoral Symphony*" and "*Pastoral Sonata*."

### DEAFNESS AND DESPAIR

But his deafness grew apace, and the realization tormented him ceaselessly. At first he kept it a profound secret, but in 1801 he could no longer contain himself, and wrote to his two friends, Dr. Wegeler and Pastor Amenda: "I shall dare my fate," he concludes, "yet there are times in my life when I am the most wretched of God's creatures." He cursed his existence. This profound sadness is often mirrored in his poignant adagios. So dispirited and miserable was he that he thought he was really going to die, and contemplated suicide. In his despair he penned the famous Heiligenstadt Testament addressed to his brothers, in

## DEAFNESS AND DESPAIR

which he poured out his anguish of heart.

This was not all. Woman added her contribution to his woe. During the same year Beethoven was in love with his pupil Giulietta Guicciardi, to whom he dedicated the famous "*Moonlight Sonata*." At first his love brought him peace and joy, but soon some bitter realizations turned it to gall. He was humiliated by their difference in rank, and moreover Giulietta was a coquette, childish, vain, and heartless, utterly unable to grasp the true nobility of her admirer. The "*Second Symphony*" was an expression of his youthful love. In 1803 she married Count Gallenberg, whom Beethoven had frequently helped out of debt. The shock almost killed Beethoven.

But his powerful nature and creative instinct carried him even through this terrible crisis. In 1803 the great oratorio "*The Mount of Olives*" was finished and in April of that year, this together with the "*Second Symphony in D*" and the "*Pianoforte Concerto in C Minor*" were performed with Beethoven himself as pianist. "The rehearsal was terrible," states Ries. "By half past two everybody was tired out and more or less discontented." But the imperturbable Prince Lichnowsky brought refreshments and restored their spirits with his encouraging sallies.

# BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

## THE "EROICA SYMPHONY"

The Revolution reached Vienna. Beethoven was swept away by the spell of it, for his sympathies leaned towards revolutionary ideas, republican principles, and universal suffrage. In 1793 when Beethoven had met Bernadotte, the French Ambassador to Vienna (later King of Sweden), their conversation together had suggested to Beethoven the idea of the "*Eroica Symphony*," and "blow by blow he forged the Iliad of Empire." This was really the first music to embody the revolutionary feeling.

Napoleon as the First Consul, the Protagonist of Liberty and Democracy, had fired Beethoven's imagination. Proudly he had inscribed the name of Napoleon on the title page, but when he learned that he had donned the Imperial rôle, he tore off the title page, and stamped on it in a frenzy of rage. His idol had fallen. "He is only an ordinary man," he cried, and wrote the avenging title "*Eroica Symphony, composed to celebrate the memory of a great man.*" Later his scorn for Napoleon subsided. When he heard of Napoleon's death on St. Helena in 1821, he remarked: "I composed the music suitable for this sad event some seventeen years ago."

## THERESA VON BRUNSWICK

"*The Eroica*" was dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz, in whose home it was performed during the winter of 1804.

In 1805 Beethoven was busy with the production of his only opera, "*Fidelio*."

## THERESA VON BRUNSWICK

The next year Beethoven's heart again became involved. In May, 1806, he was betrothed to Theresa von Brunswick, who had loved him from the time when as a young girl she had taken lessons from him during his first stay in Vienna. Beethoven knew her brother Count Franz Brunswick. To afford Beethoven a safe asylum from the French troops, who were over-running Austria, the Count had invited him to stay with them at Martonvasar in Hungary. Beethoven's inflammable heart responded warmly to Theresa's love. Many wonderful hours were spent together, of which Theresa has left some intimate glimpses in her letters.

The "*Fourth Symphony*," composed during this year, treasures up the exquisite sweetness of these days, the happiest of his whole life. He became sparkling, bright, full of life, patient with tedious people, and careful in his dress. "The lion is in love; he draws in his

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

claws." But beneath the tenderness and calm still slept the power, the capriciousness, and passionate nature of the rugged giant. For some reason never discovered, the engagement was broken off, and in 1810 we find Beethoven again abandoned by love, but full of joy nevertheless and conscious of his now matured power. Some of his most perfect works were written during this period: the "*Sonata Appassionata*," dedicated to Theresa's brother, the fantastic "*Sonata, Op. 78*," and the "*Fifth*" and "*Pastoral Symphonies*."

He was now forty, in the prime of life; back of him a succession of triumphs and achievements that might have tempted many men to lay down their arms. Ambition and love were gone. He relapsed into his negligence of dress, his former wild, unregulated moods, and disregard of the conventions of life. He turned to his one solace, the power to create. "Power constitutes the morality of men who distinguish themselves above the ordinary. I recognize no sign of superiority in mankind other than goodness," he writes on July 17, 1812.

Yet he was no misogynist. Women still attracted him and pleased him. At Töplitz he became enamored of a charming, intellectual girl from Berlin, Amalie Sebald. He was



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also attracted to the Countess Erdödy, and the Baroness von Ertmann, a talented musician and exponent of Beethoven's music. Visiting the latter a short time after the death of her son, Beethoven, conscious of the futility of words, went to the piano, saying: "Let us talk in tones." "And he told me all," exclaimed the mother, relating the incident later.

### GOETHE AND BEETHOVEN

In 1810 Bettina von Arnim, Goethe's "child," had met him and they had become well acquainted. In 1812 she writes Goethe: "No King or Emperor was ever so conscious of his power." His strength fascinated her. "When I saw him for the first time," she is supposed to have written to Goethe, "the whole exterior world vanished from me. Beethoven made me forget the world and even you. O Goethe . . . I do not think I am wrong in saying this man is very far ahead of modern civilization."

That same year the two giants met at a Bohemian spa, Töplitz, but they could not agree. Beethoven admired Goethe tremendously, but the manners and speech of the former wounded the more courtly Goethe. A letter to Bettina from Beethoven recounts an incident little

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qualified to please Goethe: "Kings and princes can easily make professors and privy councillors, but they cannot make great men, or minds which rise above the base turmoil of the world . . . and when two men are together such as Goethe and myself, these fine gentlemen must be made conscious of the difference between ourselves and them!" and goes on to tell how he reproved Goethe for being too subservient to the Imperial family, which passed them during their walk.

Goethe in turn remarks of Beethoven: "His marvelous talent astounded me. But unfortunately he is possessed of a wild and uncouth disposition; doubtless he is not wrong in finding the world detestable, but that is not the way to make it pleasant for himself or for others. We must excuse and pity him for he is deaf." At the bottom of his heart Goethe admired Beethoven's music, but feared it would disturb his hardly won calm of mind. In 1830, three years after Beethoven's death, he admitted as much to Mendelssohn who visited him in Weimar and played for him the first movement of the "*Fifth Symphony*."

In Töplitz Beethoven composed his "*Seventh*" and "*Eighth Symphonies*." In 1809 Jérôme Bonaparte, the newly established King of Westphalia, had offered Beethoven the post

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of Capellmeister at Cassel, at a salary of \$1,500. This had aroused his friends to guarantee him a pension of 4,000 florins, worth about \$1,000 then, payable half yearly. However, through the bankruptcy of Austria, its depreciation of currency, and the death in 1812 of Prince Kinsky, one of the guarantors, the pension proved to be more a source of worry than material benefit.

Beethoven had to institute suit against Prince Kinsky's heirs, winning his case in 1814, yet being unable to touch the 1,800 florins placed to his credit by the Prince. Prince Lobkowitz, another guarantor, always irregular in his payments, died in 1816, so that source of income was lost to Beethoven for good and all.

In 1818 he wrote: "I am nearly reduced to beggary, yet I am obliged to act as though I want for nothing." Again he states: "*My Sonata, Op. 106* was written under the most pressing conditions. It is hard to work for one's bread." His works brought him little. He received only 300 to 400 ducats for a sonata. Prince Galitzin ordered three quartets from him and never paid for them.

Winter and summer Beethoven rose at day-break, commenced work immediately and wrote continuously until his dinner hour at two

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

or three in the afternoon. Occasionally he would saunter out into the open air, always carrying his inevitable note-book, in which he would jot down any idea that came to him. "Cold and heat," writes Schindler, his biographer, "rain or sunshine, were all alike to him. In the autumn he used to return to town as though he had been slaving at the daily toil of the reapers and gleaners. Winter restored his somewhat yellow complexion."

Schindler recounts how Beethoven, during the moment of inspiration, would rush to the wash basin and empty several jugs over his head, singing and shouting during this time, while the water that splashed over the floor would trickle down on the heads of the people below. He loved the twilight and chose that hour for improvising, sometimes at the piano, at other times on the violin or on the viola. Because of his deafness his playing on the string instruments left much to be desired.

Spohr recounts his peculiar manner of conducting. "Although I had been warned beforehand," he says, "the whole thing greatly astonished me. Beethoven had accustomed himself to indicate to the orchestra the marks of expression by all sorts of extraordinary movements. Whenever a *sforzando* occurred he would vehemently open both arms, which

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had before been folded. For a *piano* he bent down, and the softer it was to be played the lower he stooped. For a *crescendo* he drew himself ever higher and higher, till at the arrival of the *forte* he gave a leap into the air; he would also scream out, without knowing it, in order to emphasize an increase of the *forte*."

Beethoven consulted a great number of doctors in an attempt to remedy his deafness, but obtained no success. Deafness became more and more pronounced. Maelzel, the inventor of the metronome, had manufactured a new sound conductor, which Beethoven hoped would enable him to hear better, but it proved of doubtful value.

Early in 1814 Schuppanzigh sent a young man, Anton Schindler, to call on Beethoven. The two became very friendly, and despite several misunderstandings, Schindler became a kind of secretary and assistant, and in this way was able to contribute an enormous amount of biographical material on Beethoven's later life. This together with the letters and material left him at the death of Stephan Breuning, enabled Schindler to write his well-known biography of Beethoven. This has furnished invaluable information to later biographers and critics of the composer's works.

# BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

## THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

In 1814, in the midst of the preparations for the revival of Beethoven's opera "*Fidelio*," his old friend Prince Lichnowsky died. It was a propitious time for Beethoven, however. Napoleon had been defeated and the Congress of Vienna was assembled in full splendor to settle the affairs of Europe. Kings, princes, ambassadors, and diplomats, drawn there from over all Europe by this significant occasion, took pride in honoring the gifted composer. At the invitation of the municipality, Beethoven composed a cantata for the occasion, "*Der glorreiche Augenblick*" (The Glorious Moment), not at all comparable to his best works.

The two halls of the Redouten-Saal, placed at his disposal by the Government, holding about 6,000 persons, were crowded to the limit with the most distinguished residents and visitors. This was the glorious external event of Beethoven's life. After this honors from everywhere were showered upon him. London, Paris, Stockholm, and Amsterdam created him honorary member of their respective academies, and, most prized of all, Vienna presented him with the freedom of the city. In the house of his illustrious pupil, Archduke Rudolph, he was presented to the Empress



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Elizabeth of Russia, with whom he conversed cordially for some time, and who made him a gift of 2,000 ducats. His financial position improved so considerably that he was able to invest in shares in the Bank of Austria.

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But clouds soon commenced to gather. Napoleon's escape from Elba threw the city into consternation. Beethoven had a serious quarrel with his friend Stephan Breuning, aggravated by his own brother Caspar. In November, 1815, Caspar died and left Beethoven a legacy so disastrous that it almost rivaled his deafness,—the guardianship of the young son, Carl, then only eight years old. The new guardian immediately started suit for the full charge of his nephew, in order to remove him from the doubtful influence of his mother, whom Beethoven called "The Queen of Night." This contest dragged out for four years but finally resulted in the victory of Beethoven, who immediately took the boy to his own house and proceeded to start house-keeping. The results can be imagined; "hiring and firing" of housekeepers, continual change of lodgings, confusion, trouble, and distraction

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for Beethoven, and a rather unsatisfactory home for the boy.

Beethoven's unhappiness increased. In 1816 the Prince Lobkowitz died, thus decreasing his pension; the deafness became complete, so that people could communicate with him only through writing. The musical public turned against him in favor of Rossini. "Mozart and Beethoven are old pedants. The stupidity of the age just past took pleasure in them; though only since Rossini's time do we know what melody really is. '*Fidelio*' is mere filth; how can one take the trouble to go and listen to it?" was an opinion current in Viennese salons. During the winter of 1816-1817 he suffered from a severe attack of bronchitis which kept him in bed for a long time, and left him with chronic catarrh. In 1821 he had jaundice and in 1825 a serious inflammation of the bowels, from which he never completely recovered.

When "*Fidelio*" was revived in 1822, Beethoven wished to conduct the dress rehearsal. "From the duo in the first act," says Schindler, "it was evident he heard nothing that passed on the stage. General confusion ensued. The regular orchestra leader, Umlauf, suggested a moment of rest, without giving any reason, and after a few words had been exchanged with the singers, a fresh start was made.

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Again the same disorder ensued. A second pause had to be made. The impossibility of going on under Beethoven's leadership was plain; yet how was he to be apprised of the fact? None had the heart to say to him: 'Withdraw, you poor unfortunate, you cannot conduct!' Beethoven disquieted, agitated, turning to left and to right, endeavored to read the expression of the various faces, to understand wherein lay the obstacle; silence reigned on every side.

"Suddenly he called me to him in an imperious manner. When I drew near, he handed me his copybook and signed for me to write; I traced the following words: 'I beg of you not to go on, I will explain why at home.' With one bound he leaped into the pit crying, 'Let us get out quickly!' He ran without stopping until he reached the house, entered, and fell motionless upon a couch, covering his face with his hands. He had been stricken to the heart, and to the day of his death he never forgot the impression left by this terrible scene."<sup>2</sup> He took refuge in Nature. In summer he would roam about all day in the open. "No one on earth can love the country as much as I do," he said.

<sup>2</sup> Anton Karl Schindler, "The Life of Beethoven." Oliver Ditson Co., Boston, Mass.

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

That succession of great piano sonatas which were thrown off by the master's hand continuously during his whole life was brought to a fitting close by that in E major, Op. 109, and the Sonatas in A-flat minor and C minor in 1822. Soon after followed the "*Ninth Symphony*," which contains a choral setting to Schiller's "Ode to Joy." The sublime "*Mass in D*," the "*Missa Solemnis*," undertaken to commemorate the instalment of his pupil the Archduke Rudolph in the archbishopric of Olmütz, and intended to be completed in 1820, did not appear until 1822.

The persistent successes of the brilliant Rossini had won the Viennese public from the rugged fare which Beethoven offered, although their personal regard for their great genius remained. To tell the truth, the public, which had greeted everything he had offered with great enthusiasm, could not any longer follow or appreciate the profound musical utterances of his later period. These were much in advance of the present taste, for Beethoven was forging the mighty music of the future.

Beethoven tried in vain to obtain a sufficient subscription for the performance of his great "*Mass in D*." For a while he considered having it performed in Berlin. But the Viennese could not endure the thought of surrendering

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him to another capital, and a group of friends, after much difficulty, prevailed upon Beethoven to have both the "*Mass*" and the "*Choral Symphony*" produced in Vienna. Artistically the concert was a brilliant success, but financially it was a great disappointment. The profits of one of the most stupendous concerts on record were only 420 florins. The theatre had cost 1,000 florins, copying 800 more, while the prices had remained the same. Beethoven broke down completely when he heard of this and had to be carried to a sofa, where he fell asleep dressed and remained until morning.

The creative instinct continued to reassert itself invincibly. Beethoven commenced plans for a tenth symphony, a setting of Faust, Grillparzer's "*Melusine*," and an overture on Bach, which were destined never to be fulfilled. In 1824 at the request of Prince Galitzin, a Russian nobleman, Beethoven set to work to complete the commission calling for three quartets. Ideas came so fast that Beethoven discovered he had material enough for six. A flash of his old humor, not yet extinguished, asserted itself in connection with the performance of the "*Quartet in E Flat*." Each member of the Quartet,—Schuppanzigh, Weiss, Linke, and Holtz,—was asked by the composer to sign the following document:

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"My Good Friends,

"Each will herewith receive his part; but he must promise obedience, and vow to exert his utmost to distinguish himself and to emulate the zeal of his companions.

"Every one who wishes to join in the performance must sign this paper."

[Four signatures follow.]

### THE FINAL CHAPTER

In the month of October, 1821, that ever irritating thorn, his nephew Carl, was the reason for Beethoven's taking up his abode with his brother, Johann, at Gneixendorf, near Krems on the Danube. The former apothecary had turned to fulfilling army contracts and had amassed a small fortune. After being expelled from the University where he had started a philosophical course, Carl had been placed in the school of the Polytechnic Institute. Beethoven's letters to his nephew during this period, 1825, are full of tender solicitude and fatherly counsel. The climax was reached when Carl attempted an examination without sufficient preparation, failed, and attempted suicide, which was not successful. The police of Vienna ordered him to leave the city within twenty-four hours after this escapade.



## THE FINAL CHAPTER

Beethoven then attempted to obtain a cadetship for Carl in the regiment of Baron von Stutterheim, and it was during the interval preceding the final appointment that Beethoven and his nephew took refuge at Gneixendorf. Beethoven also desired to persuade Johann to make his will in favor of their Carl. It turned out that in this he was later successful. Conditions at Johann's house soon became impossible, and finally one day in December they set out in an open carriage for a two days' trip to Vienna. It was Beethoven's last ride, for when he reached the city he was a very sick man.

His house at that time was a disused monastery and his sleeping room was too immense to be heated well, so that he was subjected to further cold. Then his nephew forgot to summon a physician and two days elapsed before anyone attended him. When a physician did finally arrive Beethoven was in the grip of a furious fever. For three months his iron constitution resisted the deadly encroachment of the pulmonary inflammation. Dropsy set in also. Even during this time he attempted to work repeatedly, but was too weak. His good friends were in constant attendance. But the inevitable could not be warded off any longer.

On March 26, 1827, his most intimate

## BEETHOVEN AND ROMANTIC SYMPHONY

friends set out to select a grave. No one was left with Beethoven but Anselm Hüttenbrenner, a friend of Schubert, who had come to pay a visit. A terrific snow storm delayed the return of the party. From three to five o'clock in the afternoon the master had been unconscious. His breathing was growing perceptibly weaker. Hüttenbrenner, with his arm under Beethoven's head, was convinced that the end was near. The building was exposed to the full fury of the storm, but the dying man gave no sign that he was conscious of the warring elements. At dusk the storm subsided, but suddenly a flash of lightning illuminated everything. The terrific peal of thunder penetrated even to Beethoven's ears. Startled into consciousness, he raised himself abruptly from Hüttenbrenner's embrace, threw out his right arm with the fist doubled, remained in this position a moment as if in defiance of the threatening elements, and fell back dead.

At the funeral which took place on March 29, 1827, from the church of the Minorites, 20,000 people followed the bier of the great Beethoven.

An autopsy the next day revealed a condition that makes one wonder how he had lived as long as he did. His liver was found to be half its proper size, hard, and tough like

## THE FINAL CHAPTER

leather, full of numerous nodules. There were also marks of ulceration in the pharynx, about the tonsils, and in the Eustachian tubes. The ear drum was thickened and the auditory nerves were degenerated and apparently paralyzed. Much of his jaundice, colic, indigestion, headaches, and fits of depression had been due to the liver condition.

## II

### "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

#### THE THREE STYLES

IN "Beethoven and His Three Styles" W. de Lenz has set forth the thesis that Beethoven's works may be divided into three distinct periods. Although this concept has been criticized as too absolute and all too inexact, the description of the three styles is very suggestive. It is quite certain that Beethoven did not abruptly change his style at two fixed periods, for the development of his genius was continuous, and from the first works to the last Beethoven is always Beethoven. Yet few composers have ended their work so far removed in spirit and structure from their earlier efforts as did Beethoven, and to indicate the characteristics of three major stages of his growth may be permissible.

Typical of the first style discernible up to the year 1800 are his "*First*" and "*Second Symphonies*," his "*Septet*," and the first six string quartets. Here Beethoven still respects the traditions of Haydn and Mozart. His

## THE THREE STYLES

music is worldly brilliant, and pleasing. The entertainment element of the art is uppermost. Still in the Sonatas for the Piano Solo, Op. 10, numbers 1 and 3, we discover the serious, proud, and profound Beethoven, disdainful of the world and absorbed in expressing his tortured feelings. In some of the slow movements of his early sonatas—for example, Sonatas, Op. 7 and 10, No.3—the depth and passion of his mature period may be found.

It is in the "*Third Symphony*," the "*Eroica*," that his own distinctive originality asserts itself. Here we discover those colossal proportions, those violent contrasts, that directness and power that are inseparably associated with Beethoven. He is no longer worldly and subservient; he is proud, assertive, although withal romantic and appealing. He is absorbed in translating emotions in all their intensity, yet he does not sacrifice the accepted standards of balance and proportion. This second period, up to about 1813, covers the production of his most lovely works, his "*Waldstein*" and "*Appassionata*" sonatas, his remaining symphonies with the exception of the "*Ninth*," his opera "*Fidelio*," and much of his quartet writing.

From 1815 till his death Beethoven wrote some of the most prodigious works ever conceived by human genius. They include the

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

Trio, Op. 97, five Sonatas for the Piano, Op. 106 to Op. 111, the "*Mass in D*," the "*Ninth Symphony*," and the last six string quartets. These works are characterized by a rupture of traditional forms; the structure becomes more supple, more complex, more varied, and more subservient to the exigencies of expression. The melodic themes lose their regularity, they become lengthened, less clearly defined, the closing cadence indigenous to classic form is eliminated. Beethoven has set his foot on the path which Wagner terms "that of infinite melody."

The general structure is also modified, for example, in the Sonata, Op. 101 a march supplants a scherzo, and fugues are introduced into the Sonatas, Op. 106 and Op. 110. Also in his later sonatas and the "*Ninth Symphony*," we encounter pages of fierce instrumental recitative, resembling an improvised declamation. Finally Beethoven utilized the grand variation, neglecting the more rigid traditions of the classic variation. In this new style Beethoven extends the modification of the theme to every element: melody, harmony, rhythm, key, tempo, dimension and mood. For examples see Sonatas, Op. 109, Op. 111, and Symphonies No. 3, Finale, No. 7, Allegretto, and No. 9, Adagio.



## FIRST SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR

This innovation of form is matched by the revolutionary departure in subject matter. For in these last works Beethoven was absorbed in mirroring that interior, noumenal realm of the spirit, where reposed that mystic rapture, that seraphic calm, those vast, abstract, and universalized feelings that betoken a Brahmanic consciousness, wherein the discrete is sublimated into the cosmic.

### FIRST SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR

1. Adagio Molto; Allegro con brio
2. Andante, cantabile moto
3. Minuetto e Trio
4. Finale, Adagio; Allegro molto vivace

Beethoven wrote nine symphonies, "The Immortal Nine," and had sketched a tenth, which were composed over a period of about twenty-five years, from 1800 to 1824. The first symphony was originally performed at the first of the composer's personally arranged concerts on April 2, 1800, but represented the fruit of about five years' deliberation. Although it is far in advance of Haydn's works this symphony would lose much of its value did it not constitute the first of Beethoven's magnificent series. The very smallest products

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of a great man are significant. The work is scored for the usual orchestra of Haydn and Mozart, with clarinets added. Surprising is the ease with which Beethoven, who had had very little actual practice, handles his instrumentation. His early experience in the Elector's band at Bonn had born rich fruit.

The slow introduction of only twelve bars opens with a discord in the key of F, followed in the third bar by one in the key of G. This bit of heresy called out the barks of the critics, whose ears were shocked to hear a composition professing to be in C major commencing in F. The first theme of the Allegro is vigorous and resolutely marks the key. Direct and assertive, it has a ring of true Beethoven manliness. A delicate feminine second theme in the dominant (the key of G according to rule) is carried by the flute and oboe in alternate statement.

Beethoven contributes an original touch near the end of the movement when he entrusts a passage in the bass, with the hushed accompaniment of the strings, modulating through G minor, B flat, E minor, and G major. The coda of the exposition of the Allegro consists of a new phrase and a passage for the wind alone. This is repeated and then comes development, full of swiftly mounting arpeg-

## FIRST SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR

gios that lend an air of buoyant ascension. The recapitulation is condensed and contains a discriminating deployment of the instruments.

The second movement contains a simple, lovely theme that is elaborately developed and interspersed with charming little sallies of fun and humor. It has a touching human plaint, that is occasionally broken by these bright little excursions. It contains no hint of the awful sorrow and tragedy of the later slow movements. The most salient feature of this *Andante* is an independent solo passage for the drum, which occurs three times: first on G, then on C, and again on C. Ordinarily the drums would be in the tonic, F and C, but Beethoven adjusts them to the dominant, C and G, a distinct innovation. This passage foreshadows his distinctive use of the drums in his later works, for example, in the *Andante* of the "*Fourth Symphony*," and the *Finale* of the "*Fifth Piano Concerto*," and others.

The third movement, termed a Minuetto, is an embryonic scherzo, that has shyly broken the bonds of the dance and is stepping into the realm of pure glee and exuberant humor. He has packed into this little movement a succession of exquisite modulations that make the canvas glow with brilliantly shifting colors. It

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presages the giant scherzi of the later works. The Trio is a delicious bit of interlocution between the winds and the strings.

The Finale is the least characteristic movement of the whole work, reverting almost entirely to the tradition of Haydn. It possesses much of the latter's innocent gayety, but is more youthful, more airy and spontaneous. In structure also, with its frequent imitations and perfunctory scale-passages, it is a distinct reversion.

The finish of the work is remarkable, its spirit is unmistakable, but how immature it seems compared to his later products. When it first appeared the critics stormed at it, denouncing it as "a caricature of Haydn pushed to absurdity." But it soon gained great favor and it was enthusiastically lauded.

### SECOND SYMPHONY IN D MAJOR

1. Adagio molto; Allegro con brio
2. Larghetto
3. Scherzo and Trio
4. Allegro molto

This work was completed in 1802, hard upon the heels of the first. Beethoven had tasted the wine of orchestral composition and has-

## SECOND SYMPHONY IN D MAJOR

tened to repeat that delicious experience. It followed the somber Heiligenstadt will, and one might naturally expect a leaden sadness and hopeless dejection in this composition. Astonishing to note, it does not contain a single despondent bar, but rides a buoyant stream of confidence and content. At thirty-two the stream of life flowed too vigorously for grief to find permanent lodgment.

This second attempt is more massive, more spontaneous, and sparkling than the first tentative groping. The structure is larger, more adroitly shaped, and more thoroughly warmed through by the fiery spirit of this creator. It is still old-period music, the shadow of Haydn is present, passage work, diatonic intervals, and successions of thirds abound.

The first movement is dashing and brilliant, the instrumental parts move more freely, the violin carries some beautiful figures, and charming modulations appear. The theme of the Larghetto is exquisite; despite its frequent repetition we can hardly endure its departure. The succeeding unfoldment is gracefully ornamented by the liquid-voiced woodwinds. Here we catch a glimpse of that inventive prodigality that is later to amaze us so profoundly. The Scherzo (now properly designated) that ensues, is picturesque and dashing. A surpris-

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

ing power is released with an astonishing economy of means. The Finale is the most distinctive in mood and form. It possesses an elusiveness, a capriciousness, and bizarrerie that utterly nonplussed his contemporaries. The players pronounced it difficult to play. But the difficulty was not one of technic, but one of mood and spirit. Its extraordinary fire surpassed anything that had ever preceded it. It is full of the magic and vigor of life. Its fusion of poetry and energy was unprecedented.

### THIRD SYMPHONY, "EROICA," IN E FLAT

1. Allegro con brio
2. Marcia funebre; Adagio assai
3. Scherzo and Trio; Allegro vivace, Alla breve
4. Finale; Allegro molto, interrupted by Poco Andante, con espressione, and ending Presto

The account of the first inspiration of this work and the change in its dedication has been given before. It was completed in August, 1804, but was not performed publicly until April, 1805. This work is of immense length, one of the longest of the whole series, and



## THE "EROICA"

marks the beginning of the second period, the complete emancipation from the traditional structures. Here we can observe for the first time the real Beethoven painting, as did Michael Angelo his great frescoes, the gigantic contours of his hero on a vast tonal canvas.

Beethoven deliberately set out to portray in music his conception of a great humanitarian hero, which he fondly hoped was embodied in Napoleon Bonaparte. The work does not pretend to be a recountal of the events in the life of the hero; rather it aims to delineate the various moods and feelings of the hero, and perhaps also the feelings of the people involved. This explanation answers the criticism that the serene Trio and the passionate Finale should not follow the "*Funeral March*" movement. Chronological faithfulness would be an impertinence here. Although Wagner has named the four movements *Action, Tragedy, Serenity, Love*, thus attempting to associate each movement with the mood of a heroic figure, in the case of the last two movements this perhaps involves stretching the analogy too far. Whatever may have been the animating cause of the work, it is pure music and not merely some crassly imitative programme music.

The opening theme of the first movement,

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

a sturdy diatonic figure with a little pendant of the diminished third as the tail of the first subject, suggests very aptly the grand, fine proportions of the humanitarian, who enters "touching with giant hands the foundations of human existence, which he wants to ameliorate by renewing them." This movement depicts the events of the hero with a fullness of episode that extends to an almost unmanageable length.

"In its climax, the real work of the hero is seen," states Nohl; "the old order of things is heard crumbling and falling to pieces in its powerful and terrific syncopations and dissonant chords, to make place for a new existence, one more worthy of human beings. But, at the close of the movement, the victorious hero exultingly yokes the new order of things to his chariot. This is history, the world's history in tones; and, for its sake, we may for the moment shroud the dearest longings of the heart in the dark robes of resignation."<sup>3</sup>

Beethoven understood the tragic fates of all heroes, who must fall and die, that their work may live after them, and who often, after apparently the most terrible failures, bequeath to mankind a priceless heritage. The long,

<sup>3</sup> Ludwig Nohl, "Beethoven." William Reeves, London.

## THE "EROICA"

beautiful coda is the most original structural innovation of this part. In the second slow movement we have a funeral march of tragic pathos. It is not for Napoleon we mourn, for he was not dead, but for the ever recurring heroes of mankind, as they are borne solemnly to the grave. It is humanity mourning for those mighty, noble souls who must lose their heart's blood to accomplish their tasks, and who are crushed by the weight of existing institutions.

The Scherzo, with its gay and sometimes boisterous abandon, might very well be intended to depict the hero in his moments of relaxation. The Finale, consisting of a remarkable set of variations on an exquisite theme, betrays remarkably skillful workmanship. So lovely and touching are some portions that one might be prevailed upon to agree with Liszt that this aimed to display the kindly and affectionate side of the hero's nature. The close of the Poco Andante is especially touching and its strong march rhythm recalls vividly the "*Funeral March*," and perhaps some connection is intended. "Whether this be the case or not," states Sir George Grove, "the March may well represent the death of the hero, and the interment of his mortal part. The Poco Andante is his flight to the skies." A short

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

Presto concludes this monumental pioneering work.

This symphony was purchased by Prince Lobkowitz, to whom it was dedicated, and was first performed semi-publicly at the home of Herr von Wurth, a wealthy banker, in January, 1805. The first public performance took place on Sunday evening, April 17, of the same year in the An der Wien theatre, with Beethoven conducting. A story is told that Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, an accomplished pianist, when visiting Prince Lobkowitz, in 1805 at his castle at Raudnitz, Bohemia, requested that the "*Eroica*" be repeated twice after he had heard it the first time.

A critic of a Leipsic paper describes the work, "as virtually a daring, wild fantasia of inordinate length and extreme difficulty of execution. There is no lack of striking and beautiful passages, but on the other hand the work seems often to lose itself in utter confusion." There is a grim irony about the last phrase. Little did the critic know of Beethoven's phenomenal control of every element of his work, and of the inexorable pruning to which he subjected everything. This is another illustration that contemporaneous judgment is often unjust, for frequently it undervalues merit and overestimates the mediocre.

## FOURTH SYMPHONY IN B FLAT

### FOURTH SYMPHONY IN B FLAT

1. Adagio; Allegro vivace
2. Adagio
3. Minuetto; Allegro vivace; Trio; un poco meno Allegro
4. Allegro, ma non troppo

Schumann speaks of this work as a slender Greek maiden between two Norse giants, but this leaves out the elements of romance, humor, and gayety, which are so unmistakable in this symphony. It is veritably a symphony of love, full of peace, joy, and buoyant life, alternated by moments of playful mystery, alluring coquetry, and roguish challenging. Here we enter also the enchanted world of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream." For here are Puck and Blossom, Oberon, and Titania, dancing and flitting about, and in the lumbering bassoon we detect the luckless, donkey-headed Bottom.

After a short, sad introduction, the violins commence their mysterious whisperings, and are soon joined by the clownish bassoon. A mocking syncopated phrase occurs, followed by a serio-comic conference by the bassoon, oboes, flutes, and violins. The violins, in a subdued tremolo, are then rudely interrupted by a boisterous burst of laughter by the

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

whole company. The violins break in to repeat the first part. The second part, containing the same thematic material, is full of sudden, lovely transpositions, and side excursions. The kettledrums join in the merrymaking. Innocent, roguish merriment and lilting good humor burst through every measure of the first movement.

The Adagio, containing five instead of the usual three sections, is playful and rollicking, moving with a light, airy tread. The last movement starts off with a figure reminiscent of a miniature Bach fugue, which appears like an attempt to squelch the most irrepressible sprites of the group, who, however, break away and a gay helter-skelter of merrymaking ensues. This symphony is the most playful and gay of the whole group.

### FIFTH SYMPHONY IN C MINOR

1. Allegro con brio
2. Andante con moto, più moto
3. Scherzo and Trio—Allegro
4. Finale Allegro; with return to the Trio and Final Presto

"So thunders Fate at the door" (*so pocht das Schicksal an die Pforte*), remarked Beetho-



## FIFTH SYMPHONY IN C MINOR

ven about the sudden Cyclopean attack of the first phrase of this Iliad of the Soul. It is the crashing blow of an aroused Fate, grimly determined to cleave apart the constricting Ego of an imprisoned giant soul. Only a herculean attack could make an impress on so tenacious a nature as Beethoven. This is the grim saga of his own soul-struggle against the crushing forces of external environment, against the weight of age-old faults of character and accumulated spiritual torsions.

The first theme thunders demoniacally at the adamantine door of the Ego, but without avail, its first fury availeth naught. Fate retreats, beaten back, but retreats only to gather renewed strength. Then comes the second theme, the exquisitely tender and winning tones of the inner Voice, pleading with the Soul to relinquish its fatal attachment to Pride, to Selfishness, and Lawlessness. But without avail; the Ego will hear naught of it, and the fearful struggle is renewed. Again comes the sweet, admonishing Voice and once more it is furiously brushed aside. The awful contest is taken up afresh, and for the third time stops where it commenced. The first movement ends here with both contestants unsuccessful, but both grimly determined to conquer. Nowhere, in the history of music, do we find such

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furious energy, such remorseless incisiveness concentrated in so small a compass. It is like the onslaught of a typhoon, appalling in its suddenness of attack and its devastating force. The rock-ribbed foundations of the earth seem to tremble under the force of its impact.

Wagner states that the pause on the E flat of the first phrase is rarely held long enough, and pictures Beethoven calling from his grave as follows: "My pauses must be long and serious ones. Do you think I made them in sport, or because I did not know what to say next? Certainly not! That full, exhausting tone, which in my Adagio expresses unappeasable emotion, in a fiery and rapid Allegro becomes a rapturous and terrible spasm. The life-blood of the note must be squeezed out of it to the last drop, with force enough to arrest the waves of the sea, and lay bare the ground of the ocean; to stop the clouds in their courses, dispel the mists, and reveal the pure blue sky, and the burning face of the sun himself. This is the meaning of the sudden long-sustained notes in my Allegro. Ponder them here on the first announcement of the theme; hold the long E flats after the three short tempestuous quavers; and learn what the same thing means when it occurs later in the work."

The first phrase is said to have been sug-

## FIFTH SYMPHONY IN C MINOR

gested to Beethoven by the note of the yellow-hammer as he walked in the Prater or park in Vienna, and it agrees with the song of the bird in its quick succession of notes followed by a longer one, if not in the exact interval.

The *Andante con moto* in A flat is a set of lovely variations on a ravishing theme with a second short phrase intercalated. Here is proffered a sweet haven of rest for the storm-tossed spirit, a healing relaxation from the heat of battle. An undercurrent of sadness pervades it, a sadness tinged with wistfulness and longing, touchingly human and mellow in feeling. Only a great heart that had suffered much could have written such phrases. Mozart and Haydn would have found it impossible. It sinks deep into the sweetest and kindest of human emotions. It possesses a subtle yearning, a desire to protect and shield a loved one from the cruel onslaught of the world. At times this yearning takes courage and asserts itself as stanch faith and assured confidence, only to sink back in the quieter mood. The *forte* ending, however, is a rousing enheartenment to continued courage in which that subtle touch of longing is still present.

The *Allegro*, really a scherzo, commences with a mysterious stalking figure in the bass, full of foreboding questioning. "It is as fas-

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

cinating as the gaze of a mesmerizer," says Berlioz. The answer is desired, but with what anxiety it is awaited. In a pianissimo whisper it comes, sweet and reassuring. What follows might be termed a dialogue between Love and Reason and the still resistant Ego, for a modification of the fateful first theme is utilized here. Reluctantly the overpersuaded Ego softens and starts to accede, slowly and shamefacedly, for Pride still clings.

In the Trio the tension has been relaxed altogether. Here we seem to hear the rude humor and heavy stamping of giants, or the "grim banter of the Angels during the battle in *Paradise Lost*." Then follows a reprise of the Scherzo, in an enchantingly new form, soft, delicate and elusive, founded on the first theme. It is the sheer magic of poetry, exquisitely beautiful. It is the electrical buoyancy succeeding a sudden snapping of the cords of the age-old burdens of sins and woes. The battle has been won, and for very relief the spirit is intoxicated with joy.

We rush headlong into the glorious, triumphant Finale without a pause, and enter a new dazzling world. "Great as the music was before, magnetical, poetical, it was only that it was self-contained and did not imply that anything further was to come out of it; but now

## FIFTH SYMPHONY IN C MINOR

we feel that the music is pregnant with a new birth, and has the promise of eternity within its bosom. To hear it is like being present at the work of Creation. Strange, disorderly, almost appalling, as is the rushing surface of the mass, we cannot but feel that a divine power is working under the current; the creative force of law and order is at work there; and at last, out of the suspension and mystery and repetition which have for so long enveloped us, suddenly bursts the new world, radiant with the eternal sunshine, and welcomed by the jubilant sound of the æonian strains, when all the sons of God shouted for joy. No wonder that the work to which this forms the conclusion should have penetrated more widely and deeply than any other into the minds of men.

"Thus started, the Finale goes on its way in all the pomp and circumstance of earthly life. It may be victory or success of some other kind that is depicted, but success it undoubtedly is and a glorious career; until, as if to enforce the lesson that the ideal is higher than the visible, a part of the Scherzo is reintroduced, and we are made again to listen to a portion of the mysterious strain that was so affecting before. The initial triumphal march then returns, and the movement finishes in glory."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Sir George Grove, "Beethoven and his Nine Symphonies." Novello, Ewer and Co.

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

Thus has the hero conquered the Self, the insulating Ego, and his soul has sunk itself into the bosom of the Universal Source of All. The very planets sing for joy, for another world spirit has joined them.

### STRUCTURE OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT

For the aid of those who desire to study the structure of this symphony a tabulation of the various elements of the first and second movements is appended on page 73.

Compare this with the preceding tables of Haydn's and Mozart's (Volume xii), and observe that Beethoven destroys nothing, but adds, enriches, and unfolds the marvelous potentialities of the symphonic form. Here we find a greater force, a heightened vitality, a maturer thought, an enriched emotional content; the musical substance is more luscious and satisfying; we are enveloped in a fuller, richer beauty.

The reader who desires to obtain a first-hand conception of the epochal advances of Beethoven over Mozart and Haydn in symphonic composition is advised to secure scores of the three symphonies analyzed in this and the preceding volume and carefully compare their structure.



# ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT <sup>5</sup>

| Sections                   | Themes   | Measures |
|----------------------------|--|----------|
| Introduction               | On Motive from theme I. ....   | 1-5      |
| Exposition<br>(A)          | First theme, C-minor. ....   | 6-56     |
| Duality<br>of<br>Harmony   | Transition consisting of a chord of modulation. ....   | 58       |
|                            | Introduction to theme II based on original motive. ....  | 59-62    |
|                            | Second theme in E-flat major. ....   | 63-95    |
|                            | Codetta or Conclusion—section consisting of Conclusion-theme. ....   | 95-119   |
|                            | Reminiscence of theme I. ....  | 110-124  |
| Development<br>(B)         | Motive from theme I treated. ....  | 125-179  |
| Plurality<br>of<br>Harmony | Introduction to theme II lengthened and treated in sequence (G-minor and C-minor). ....                                  | 179-195  |
|                            | Half note phrase pass the same extended into long passage finally losing its contour and retaining only its rhythm. .... | 195-240  |
| Recapitulation<br>(A)      | Further treatment of theme I. ....   | 240-252  |
|                            | First theme, C-minor. ....   | 253-300  |
|                            | Transition leading to C-major. ....  | 302      |
| Unity of<br>Harmony        | Introduction to theme II. ....   | 303-306  |
|                            | Second theme in C-major. ....  | 307-346  |
|                            | Conclusion-theme C-major. ....   | 346-374  |
| Coda                       | Theme I treated. ....  | 374-397  |
|                            | Introduction to theme II with new counterpoint. ....   | 398-406  |
|                            | Motive from the same in diminution (basses). ....  | 406-415  |
|                            | Motive from theme II treated. ....   | 416-469  |
|                            | Motive from theme I treated. ....  | 469-502  |

<sup>5</sup> From Surette and Mason, "The Appreciation of Music." The H. W. Gray Co., N. Y.

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

### SIXTH SYMPHONY, "PASTORAL," IN F MAJOR

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Allegro ma non troppo | Cheerful feelings on<br>reaching the country |
| Andante molto moto    | By the brook                                 |
| Allegro               | Peasants' festival<br>—Allegro               |
| Allegro               | Storm  |
| Allegretto            | The Shepherd's Hymn                          |

This symphony is Beethoven's musical oblation to Nature, an avowed confession of his profound affection and devotion to her. Of Beethoven's love for Nature we have many proofs: his annual pilgrimages to Viennese suburbs, his long, solitary walks in the country, his many expressions of affection for her in conversation and in his note-books. "I love a tree more than a man," he is reported to have remarked once. "Nature was almost meat and drink to him; he seemed positively to exist upon it," testified Charles Neate, who lived with him eight months in Vienna during the year 1815. His servant, Michael Krenn, describes him in the open air from six in the morning till ten at night, roaming about the fields with or without hat, sketch-book in hand, shouting, flourishing his arms, and completely carried away by the inspiration of the ideas in

## THE "PASTORAL"

his mind. "No man on earth," he writes, "loves the country more; woods, trees, and rocks give the response which man requires."

*"Pastoral Symphony, or a recollection of country life. More an expression of feeling than a painting,"* is the composer's explanation on the dedication page. Although the *"Eroica"* may be termed programme music, that is, music in which the attempt is made by the composer to represent definite images, scenes, or incidents through purely instrumental music, its portraiture is so vague we may consider it as only a premonition of more definite accomplishments. On the other hand we do not find in the *"Sixth Symphony"* anything resembling the vigorous bounds of the stag, the tread of heavy beasts, or the undulations of the serpent, which Haydn introduced into the *"Creation."* Others had tried their hand at programme music before this, but Beethoven's work is the only one of that period which has survived in the public taste.

The first movement bears the title: *"Awakening of cheerful feelings upon arrival in the country,"* and opens with a little theme as delicious as the air of May itself, laden with the sweet, fresh odors of buds and blossoms, and rich with the fine pollen of flowering fruit trees. About this little theme, many times re-

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

iterated and modulated, is built the whole of the first movement. This reiterative device is characteristic of the whole movement, for example, a little figure of five notes, commencing in this sixteenth measure, is repeated ten times without the alteration of a note in the melody or supporting harmony. Near the end of the first section of the movement another figure is repeated twelve times, and later a little wisp of melody is reproduced for thirty-six bars and is therefrom continually present. Thus from this delicious monotony, which never becomes tiresome, we sense the periodicity of rustling leaves, of sighing tree tops, of the purring of soft winds, the pipings of small insects, and the repeated calls of the birds. We come into contact with the gentle lulling undulations of outdoor Nature in the fresh gorgeous outburst of spring.

The second movement, *Andante molto moto*, is entitled "*By the Brook*," and in its gently swaying rhythm of 12-8 time we detect the soft purling of a little crystal-clear brook, which, like a child at play, is completely absorbed in singing and gurgling to itself. Our own mood yields to its infectious persuasion, and the same ineffably sweet and childlike feeling steals into our heart. How pure and innocent is the whole atmosphere of this move-

## THE "PASTORAL"

ment! The world has reverted to its pristine freshness and sweetness. It is this movement which contains the famous nightingale songs and the calls of the quail and the cuckoo; all very lightly and briefly indicated.

The third movement termed the "*Peasant's Festival*," corresponding to the scherzo movement of the other symphonies, carries us from a contemplation of the preceding charming landscape into the sphere of human activity. Here we have an artistic caricature of a small village band, which was probably suggested to Beethoven by a group of seven players, which he saw often during his visits in the tavern of "The Three Ravens," in the Upper Bruhl near Mödling. Their music was both national and characteristic. In this movement we hear the rustic artists, the flute, oboe, bassoon, and violins, inimitably realistic, with the quaint accompaniment of the two fiddles and the clumsy, halting rhythm of the drunken and drowsy bassoon player.

The next Allegro movement, virtually a Trio, is said to depict a fight among the dancers, although it might well be a rough dance of peasants whose wine and beer had befuddled both feet and head. Suddenly the revelings are interrupted by a far-off growling of thunder, which speedily bursts into a furious

## "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

hurricane of wind, lightning, and thunder, profoundly impressive. It has a light "that never was on sea or land" and casts an ominous spell over the preceding scene. One can imagine the sudden cessation of the rustic gayety and the terror-stricken peasants huddled in the corner, cowering with fear at each ear-splitting thunder crash or sharp stabbing lightning flash. But the movement is more than a realistic portraiture of a storm; it is portentous of the vast warring elements of the cosmos: of hurricanes, earthquakes, and avalanches, whose unleashed, unruly forces are liable at any moment to burst forth and sweep away human life and property.

The storm and its dangers pass and then follows the last movement, "*The Shepherd's Hymn*" of thanksgiving, into which soon the composer himself projects his own profound feeling of gratitude and appreciation of life on this lovely little planet. In this whole symphony we have a magnificent portrayal of exquisite sensibilities and reactions of a great poet towards Nature in her contrasting aspects. It is the symphony of Mother Earth, by one of her greatest souls. What directness, what sincerity, and how infinitely sweet and harmonious do we find these feelings animating this work! Let us not incur the danger of



## SEVENTH SYMPHONY IN A MAJOR

arousing too vividly our visual imagination and of losing our way among concrete images in listening to these portraitures. For here, as in all true music, the feeling mood is the essence of the matter. The whole work is a sublime dramatization of the feeling, charmingly voiced by Goethe:

“Wirklich ist es wunderschön  
Auf der lieben Erde.”

(Truly it is wondrously beautiful  
Upon this dear Earth.)

## SEVENTH SYMPHONY IN A MAJOR

1. Poco sostenuto; Vivace
2. Allegretto
3. Scherzo, Presto; Trio, Assai meno presto
4. Finale, Allegro con brio

Four years elapsed after the “*Pastoral*” until the “*Seventh Symphony*” appeared in 1812, but many other works—stringed quartets, overtures, piano sonatas, and trios—had been turned out from Beethoven’s teeming workshop. Why this work is considered one of the greatest of his symphonies is not apparent from any marked originality in form, although

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an Allegretto is substituted for the usual Andante or Adagio. One must look deeper to detect the source of its remarkable power and fascination. Its chief claim to distinction is its vividness of mood painting, for here we step into a world of sheer romantic beauty, into that roseate world which combines the vigor and complexity of the actual world with the ineffable beauty and charm of the realm of poetic imagination. Here are vivacious rhythms, exquisite thematic material, rich velvety harmonies, and dazzling modulations, upon which plays a kaleidoscopic rainbow of colors. And yet beneath its beauteous flesh and blood what nobility of form, what sincerity of utterance! We are transported into a magic realm, where unalloyed beauty has drenched the very air and cries for notice from every permeated object.

The Poco sostenuto, really an expanded introduction in slow tempo, is opened by a short chord in A by the whole orchestra, which drops a melodious phrase into the sweet throat of the oboe, imitated successively by the clarinet, horn, and bassoon. Then come scales of two octaves in length, like gigantic ascending stairs, which reach a *forte crescendo*, and alternate with the first theme. Suddenly enters the Vivace, a swift movement of sharply accentu-

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ated 6-8 time, and we are transported into a veritable land of enchantment, of nimble rhythmic figures, of sudden flashes of fortissimo chords, succeeded by pianissimo passages, and brilliant modulations, which make one catch his breath in amazement at the audacity and breadth of the harmonic leaps. All the instruments are put through their paces like a set of gamboling acrobats.

The march-like Allegretto enters, beating time to an irresistibly infectious rhythm, and ushering in a solemn theme, nobly contemplative. The violas and 'cellos bear in a lovely second theme of much quieter rhythm, but soon it is swept aside by the insistent beats of the first theme, the

“One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that  
throws

Its black shade alike, o'er our joys and our  
woes,”

which is maintained even in the strict fugato which comprises the latter half of the movement.

The third movement, Presto, corresponding to a scherzo, is built on a delicious little theme which is treated with the utmost gayety and sprightliness. It is a gambol of fairies and

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dainty woodland creatures, breathlessly swift, ebullient, and full of capricious, dynamic surprises which might characterize a frolic of creatures with superabundant energy. The Trio, in a slightly slower tempo, evolved from a pilgrims' hymn in common use in Lower Austria, is more serious and thoughtful. Again the energetic Presto breaks in impatiently, a return to the Trio and the final repetition of the Presto.

If the Scherzo movement is the dance of fairy creatures, the Finale—*Allegro con brio*—is a bacchanalian rout of superbly developed human beings. Only a group of severely trained dancers of exceptional physique could endure the pace and the duration demanded by this furious movement. It is a dance of boisterous merriment, full of sudden vagaries, erratic turns and twists, and abrupt transitions. All restraint is flung aside; poetry, sentiment, sadness, philosophical meditations, and the strictures of conventions are forgotten; the free sportiveness of the splendid savage is permitted full release. Sinews of steel, tireless musculature, a bloodstream as clean as driven snow, an inexhaustible lung power, and a heart that knows no fatigue are necessary vehicles for the furious pace of these driving feelings.

The cyclopean sportiveness of Nature her-

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self breaks through these swiftly speeding measures. "Here," says Wagner, "the purely rhythmical movement celebrates its orgies." The prodigious force that reigns in this movement reminds one of Carlyle's hero *Dass*, who "had fire enough in his belly to burn up the whole world." Wagner has termed the whole symphony "the Apotheosis of the Dance; the Dance in its highest state; the happiest realization of the body in an ideal form," and no one who hears this superb work can fail to feel the gigantic dance instinct that breaks through it. In North Germany it was called a drunkard's work. Von Weber scorned it. In this savage gayety we discern the rugged Flemish blood of the composer. "I am," said Beethoven, "the Bacchus who brews the delicious nectar for humanity. It is I who grant men the divine frenzy of the soul."

## EIGHTH SYMPHONY IN F MAJOR

1. *Allegro vivace e con brio*
2. *Allegretto scherzando*
3. *Tempo di minuetto*
4. *Allegro vivace*

It is in the treatment of the first movement of this work that we find its chief characteristics, for the theme itself is very graceful and

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appealing. In the sudden fortissimo explosions which break out like fits of wrathful temper we get another aspect of Beethoven's gift for tonal portraiture. In this symphony we obtain an intimate glimpse of Beethoven's everyday character: his sudden fits of temper, his boisterous, often rude humor, his love of practical jokes, his enormous energy, and his impatience at restraint, yet all permeated with his sensitivity, his great poetical nature, his overflowing geniality and humanness. For although we register these sudden fortissimo clashes of the whole orchestra, these gambolings and sputterings of the bassoon, these sharp, harsh dissonances, and bewildering rhythmic intricacies, beneath them we detect our intrepid Jason unswervingly bent on the discovery of fresh musical beauties and revelations. Each moment bears a new beauty; we are still in the realm of genuine art and are spared the arid wastes of artistic impotence and fatuity.

The second and third movements, a Scherzo and a Minuet, are delicious little poetical gems. The theme of the Scherzo is said to have been founded on a canon extemporized at a supper in the spring of 1812 and addressed to Maelzel, the inventor of the metronome, in which the tricks of the instrument are imitated.



## EIGHTH SYMPHONY IN F MAJOR

The last movement, *Allegro vivace*, commences with an apparently trivial theme (said to have been suggested by a passage from a postilion's horn) which, however, through its masterly treatment, soon casts off this disguise. We discover that it contains fire and blood, for in a riot of dissonant and boisterous harmonies it is tossed back and forth and put through a bewildering variety of antics. Again there breaks in the famous C sharp, "the note of terror" (*Schreckensnote*) like an ominous outburst of divine rage. At the end this rudeness is subdued by the suasion of the appealing second theme, and all voices enter joyously in the concluding chorus.

This work, the shortest but one of the nine, was a great favorite of Beethoven's; it claimed his affection like a naughty, roguish child. When it first appeared it was utterly neglected and misunderstood. It was patronized by Berlioz and abused by Oulibacheff, and wholly neglected by conductors for decades. The idea that humor, whimsicality, and mirth could be depicted in music did not dawn on people, for it seemed too foreign an element for the grave Muse of Music. To us more sophisticated moderns it is a delicious bit of merry-making, which, however, disports always in a realm of exquisite beauty.

# "THE IMMORTAL NINE"

## NINTH SYMPHONY, "CHORAL," IN D MINOR

Allegro ma non troppo un poco maestro  
Molto vivace—Presto  
Adagio molto e cantabile. Andante moderato  
Presto  
Allegro ma non troppo  
Allegro assai  
Presto—Solo and Chorus  
Allegro assai vivace, alla marcia (Tenor Solo and Chorus)  
Andante maestoso (Chorus)  
Adagio ma non troppo, ma divoto  
Allegro energico sempre ben marcato (Chorus)  
Allegro ma non tanto (Solo and Chorus).  
Poco Allegro  
Prestissimo. Maestoso, Prestissimo (Chorus)

The unique "*Ninth Symphony*" is virtually a double symphony, one for the orchestra alone, and a second for voices and instruments together. It is more than twice as long as the "*Eighth Symphony*." It is not a symphony on Schiller's "Ode to Joy," but a symphony plus a choral treatment of the Ode. Goethe struggled all his life with the untractable Faust

## THE "CHORAL"

theme and finally succeeded in subduing and giving to the world his tremendous work. Similarly Beethoven's "*Choral Symphony*" has been termed the work of his whole life.

As early as 1795, at the age of twenty-five, he sketched the theme of the Finale in a song entitled "*Seufzer eines Ungeliebten und Gegenliebe*"; he worked it again in 1808 in his "*Fantasy for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra*"; and in 1810 he presented a new version in the song "*Mit einem gemalten Band.*" Furthermore, the idea of setting Schiller's "Ode to Joy" to music had captured his fancy as a youth and several sketches on different themes are found in his note-books of 1798, 1801, 1814, and 1822. In 1816 Beethoven undertook to write two immense symphonies for the London Philharmonic, and in November, 1823, the "*Ninth Symphony*" was practically finished with the exception of the Finale.

At first he considered a purely instrumental finale, one which later was used as the last movement of the "*Fifteenth Quartet*," Op. 132. It was not until after much hesitation and misgiving that he decided to introduce Schiller's "Ode to Joy" and the human voices at the end of the symphony. In February, 1824, the work was entirely completed. The details of how it was first produced in May,

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1824, have been previously given. Thus Beethoven at length had realized his life's dream; “that of celebrating Joy, the conqueror of grief, Joy which liberates man and brings him nearer to God.”

The very first theme of the opening movement opens up a new world to us, a world of profound solemnity, permeated with a lofty, majestic peace. It is that superb, imperturbable serenity of the Godhead itself, that state of ineffable ecstasy that can be only imperfectly realized by us weak mortals. What dignity, what calm, what sweetness and peace! We move in a different plane where the phenomenal no longer exists; where only that last quintessential feeling essence exists and permeates everything like the matrix ether. We are bathed and saturated to the depths of our being with this potent elixir of bliss. About us on all sides is glorious light, and the rhythm of the celestial music is the thrilling voice of ecstasy. It is veritably the wondrous tonal art, the ineffable music of the heavenly orbs.

In the delicious Scherzo we find only a quickening of the same magical feeling tone; the solemnity has disappeared, our surrounding medium has become lighter, freer, and more vibrant. Our spirit, instead of remaining a passive recipient of this immense joy, has be-

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come individually more active. We join in a cosmic dance of joy, ethereally light and intoxicating. In the Adagio our pace is moderated, an atmosphere of calmness and sweetness creeps over us. It contains a feeling of exquisite yearning; our heart almost bursts with its sacred joy, which we feel impelled to share with the rest of the world. It resembles the creative rapture of a young mother presenting to the world her first-born. How poignantly tender, how sweetly solicitous is this desire to render unto the Divinity our homage of joy. Then how proudly, with what dignity we lay our heart's adoration at the foot of the Heavenly Throne. Now we have completed the mystical rites of devotion. Effulgent ecstasy transfuses our whole being. We have become the sanctified instruments of the God-head.

Suddenly the Presto, with a horrible clamor, awakens us from our dream of ecstasy; we are summoned to earth again, with its woes and trials, to take our part in the mighty battle of Right against Wrong, of Joy against Sorrow, of Life against Death. Then is announced the grand theme of the Choral Ode, in which the human chorus is to partake and thus learn the taste of pure Joy, of the sweet spirit of brotherhood among men.

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“At the moment when the theme of Joy is about to appear for the first time,” says Romain Rolland, “the orchestra abruptly stops; a sudden silence falls which lends the entrance of the song a character mysterious and divine. Joy descends from the skies, enveloped in serenity supernatural; with its light breath it caresses all suffering; and the first impression produced is one so tender that when it glides into the convalescent heart, we, like one of Beethoven’s friends ‘are moved by a desire to weep when looking into her tender eyes.’ When the theme then passes to the voices, it first makes its appearance in the bass, serious in character, and somewhat downcast. Yet, little by little, Joy takes possession of the soul. It is a war of conquest against grief. And now we have rhythms of the march, of armies in movement, the ardent and breathless chant of the tenors, all those quivering pages in which we seem to catch Beethoven’s own breath, the rhythm of his respiration, and his inspired cries while he strode through the fields composing his work, carried away with demoniac exaltation, like old King Lear in the midst of the storm. Martial joy now is succeeded by religious ecstasy; then followed by a sacred orgy, a delirium of love. A quivering humanity stretches its arms toward the

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skies, raises puissant clamors, rushes towards Joy and clasps it to its heart!"<sup>6</sup>

### MUSIC REVEALS THE TRUE BEETHOVEN

Great as looms Beethoven's stature through the medium of his actions and correspondence, here we see his real self but dimly and imperfectly, as through a thick mist. It is only through the medium of his incomparable music that we can perceive the full magnificence of his spirit. It is here that he moves most freely, that he speaks most compellingly and eloquently; and unlocks for us the opulence of his spiritual world. In the realm of tone Beethoven moves, a supreme master, amenable to no authority but the dictates of his own creative spirit.

Beethoven, born and bred amid the strife and heat of the French Revolution, and the violent revolts of the peoples of Europe attempting to assert their fundamental rights, was eminently fitted to prove its channel of expression, both temperamentally and physiologically. Wagner suggested that the thickness of Beethoven's skull, as revealed in the autopsy, was peculiarly fitting for the housing of that sensitive brain, which required adequate pro-

<sup>6</sup> Romain Rolland, "Beethoven."



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tection against the shocks of the external world.

Beethoven's temperament, forceful, proud, and independent, peculiarly protected him against temptation to dissipate his energies in vapid social intercourse. For Vienna, fickle, gay, pleasure-loving, skeptical, and superficial, could easily have devoured the heart of its tonal master, and left an empty, useless husk, prematurely enervated by frivolity and dissipation.

Musically Beethoven was essentially self-taught, both in extempore playing and in composition. The rudiments of music he gained as a child and youth, almost nothing was learned from Haydn and Albrechtsberger, and only a little from Schenk. The force of his inherent genius, disciplined and cautiously unfolded by his iron will, accounted for the phenomenal force and originality of his works. As Beethoven's note-books show, he was a merciless critic and an indefatigable reviser of his own musical ideas. His work represented a jealously guarded evolutionary process, of which every product received a rigid overhauling and exquisite polishing.

Beethoven worked almost wholly in the sonata form, which he took as he found it and proceeded to develop to a point that has been

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unsurpassed since. Although preternaturally sensitive to design and form, Beethoven's great contribution was not the invention of new forms. His greatest service was the amazing energy of expression that he threw into every form he touched. Beethoven's feeling nature was so powerful that, like a huge battery, any contact with it sufficed to draw off a current of stunning force.

Unlike Mendelssohn, whose excessive facility of technic prevented the greatest development of his expressive power, Beethoven was compelled to wage ceaseless war against inarticulateness. The labor of composition with Beethoven was prodigious, for he would often revise a theme or a passage a dozen times before it suited his critical taste. But the finished product gave no hint of the agony of creation; it seemed utterly spontaneous, direct, and inevitable. The flow of musical ideas was ceaseless, a crude jotting in his note-book served to fix the germ idea, which would be re-examined later, and if suitable, elaborated and fitted into its proper place. Beethoven often had five or six projects under way simultaneously.

Grueling as was the ceaseless attrition of the external world and the homely details of life, it served at least one important function

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in Beethoven's case; for combined with his remorseless striving for artistic perfection it drove him on to ever deepening and ever widening spiritual growth. The stamp of Beethoven is unmistakable in all his works, but the Beethoven of the "*Ninth Symphony*" is not the writer of the "*First Symphony*." A world of experience and unfoldment has intervened. The spiritual sublimity and consummate mastery of form of the later period were hardly predictable in the first attempt.

All of Beethoven's works possess those same compact, sententious, and arresting qualities that pervade his own character and temperament. They possess the organic fitness, the swift inevitability, the unanswerable logic of a natural phenomenon. Here is a strict economy of material and means to achieve the end, combined paradoxically enough with a wealth of invention and dazzling variety. Yet nothing too much; the idea is fittingly dramatized and its logical successor takes its place on the stage. How these exquisite phrases etch themselves on our consciousness! They call forth some deep latent counterpart from the hidden places of our own being. Hauntingly familiar, they are, nevertheless, ravishing in their fresh originality.

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For they are like the natural events of life, which, though unexpected and unpredictable, yet once experienced seem inevitable and enduring.

A theme is chosen, pitifully simple it seems, but Beethoven loads it with meaning. It may contain only four or six tones, but it suffices for a kaleidoscopic treatment, that keeps us on the *qui vive* for five or six hundred measures. In thematic development Beethoven need fear no competitor. He delights in sudden fortissimos that startle and arouse, in powerful accentuation that spurs the pulse to furious hammering. For Beethoven is a daring creator of varied and striking rhythm; of tantalizing syncopations which lend interest to his rhythmic resources.

What a wealth of exquisite melodies he offers us, melodies that haunt us all our lives, melodies so ravishing that we can barely endure their ecstasy when they first appear, but which we attempt desperately to retain when they slip away. Think of that lovely second theme of the first movement of the "*Fifth Symphony*" and the main theme of its Adagio. They are piercing shafts of delight; and how tantalizing their disappearance.

Then his harmonies, how majestic some appear, like massive cyclopean walls. And

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others, how raucous and mordant; they penetrate the flesh like darts; and then comes a resolution as sweet as a scent-laden breeze. Beethoven was a master of magical modulations—we must wait for Schubert to equal them—each succession makes us catch our breath with delight.

All is controlled and premeditated: the master does not surfeit us with beauty until it cloy; he snatches it away from us at the height of our ecstasy, and a fresh wonder appears. Beethoven was a profound student of the psychology of attention and of maintaining a continually freshened interest. His vast experience in extempore playing made him a master of riveting and maintaining the interest in his tonal dramatizations.

### BEETHOVEN'S INSTRUMENTATION

Even in the most mechanical aspects of his art, we find the deep, unmistakable imprints of Beethoven's peculiar genius. Through every detail in the development of his instruments, every phrase that is projected from his mind and assigned unerringly to the proper instrument, we discern the tireless craftsman working with inexorable precision. In his use of the instruments he is as economical and

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sententious as in the employment of the musical substance itself. Each step is designed, each subtle gradation of tone and color is premeditated, each effect upon the minds of his audience is calculated and superbly executed. Astounding effects are produced with unbelievable slenderness of resources; and through this severe instrumentation streams the might of his incandescent imagination. Like Shakespeare he etches his thoughts with strokes of lightning. Here is no poverty, no niggardliness of resources, only a telling economy of means.

Despite his tremendous ingenuity and originality, Beethoven, with but few exceptions,—the “*Fifth*,” “*Sixth*,” and “*Ninth Symphonies*,”—retained practically the same instrumentation utilized by Mozart: that is, strings, the four usual woodwinds in pairs, two horns, two trumpets, and kettledrums; with the sole addition of the clarinets. In the “*C-Minor Symphony*” a piccolo flute, a contrabassoon, and three trombones augment the usual resources, all of which remain silent until the victorious Finale. The “*Sixth*” demands another piccolo flute and two trombones, whereas the “*Ninth*” adds a piccolo, a double-bassoon, four horns, three trombones, and human voices.

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Beethoven's handling of the strings attained an unsurpassable excellence, due probably to his own mastery of the violin. Sonority, power, warmth, delicacy, and astounding variety are infused into their treatment. He was the first to carry the violins into the ethereal realms of their highest registers. The luscious-toned 'cello is elevated into its rightful position as the baritone hero. Its robust tones assisted by the violas announce the fateful theme of the "*C-Minor Symphony*." In the "*Ninth Symphony*" even the violas are divided, and elsewhere also are accorded a varied treatment.

In his writing for the woodwinds Beethoven achieved many exquisite effects. The oboe speaks enchantingly in the Scherzo of the "*Pastoral*" and "*Choral Symphonies*." The clarinet was early made a blood member of the orchestral family, and royally treated. Ingenious are the original effects he coaxes out of the bassoon, whose real versatility had been entirely unsuspected until Beethoven revealed it. The bassoon is entrusted with lovely melodies, and is pressed into service as comedian and rustic. The double-bassoon as well is rescued from utter neglect.

No startling innovations characterize his treatment of the brass, although his horn writ-



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ing is much freer and more sonorous than that of Mozart, as is witnessed in the jubilant fanfare of the Scherzo of the "*Eroica*." Due to the prevalent imperfections of the trumpet and horn time, their treatment is still rather primitive. But the proud grandeur of the trombone is frequently unfolded and utilized. Most original of all, however, was Beethoven's handling of the kettledrums. From instruments of mere percussion and accentuation he raised them to the status of genuine dramatic actors in the orchestral ensemble. In his hands they depict the mysterious and delicate, the ominous and the tragic, at times dominating with their penetrating throbbings the whole symphonic edifice.

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The most significant heritage Beethoven bequeathed to mankind was the consummate eloquence of his emotional diction. So profound was his nature, so virile in its force, so intense in its sincerity, so exquisite in its sensibilities, and so many-sided was his genius, that he summed up in his formidable array of works the whole gamut of man's emotional and spiritual nature. Here for the first time we find a fit spokesman for that vast aggrega-

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tion of emotions and feelings that was struggling for expression in the human heart. Here are unfolded and dramatized the surging revolt of the people clamoring for freedom,—political freedom and freedom of thought, feeling, and action,—that newly born spirit of strength and independence, those moods of profound sadness, those outbursts of wild humor, childlike mirth, irresponsible gayety, lightness, subtlety, and a passionate love for natural beauty.

In the slow movements of his works we discover that vast capacity for sorrow and pain, and that somber, glowing passion which betrays his profound sympathy for and understanding of human sadness. Occasionally a warmer, less poignant mood creeps into these slower movements; we discover the presence of charming romantic love, the sweet passion that grows up between the sexes, treated with exquisiteness, grace, and tenderness. How rich the voice, how thrilling the accents, how moving the force of this divine emotion!

In the scherzo are depicted the lighter, gayer, and more boisterous feelings. Here we are at play, relaxed, and unrestrained in our feelings. The world of sorrow and pain melts away, we are children again, the world is our prodigious playground. However, there

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is much "storm and stress" in the scherzos of the "*Fifth*" and "*Ninth Symphonies*." In the allegro and presto movements we are summoned into the world of action, of daring plans, swift decisions, and lightning-like execution. Here is no time for sorrow, love, or play; all is motion, aggressiveness, and achievement, only strength, daring, and pertinacity are tolerated. Then as in the great "*Choral Symphony*," we are led into the atmosphere of solemn worship and joyful adoration, and are permitted to attend the most sublime conceptions ever propounded by the human spirit.

Extraordinary is the vitality, the vividness, the beauty, and variety of the feelings and emotions depicted by the master musician. Through his works breathes the mighty voice of the universal spirit itself. There is something cosmic and universal in all of Beethoven's serious utterances. They appeal to the universal elements in our hearts, and possess the ability to strike a powerfully sympathetic note.

Beethoven was the first to achieve permanent success in programme music. He was the first great Romanticist and furnished the powerful inspiration to this movement. The everyday human qualities first found an adequate outlet in his idiom, and his profoundly

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religious nature found its proper expression in his mighty works. Beethoven possesses, as perhaps no other musician, that amazing universality that characterized Shakespeare. He was all things to all men. None who drink of his deep fount of inspiration need depart thirsty.

Almost all of Beethoven's works will repay close study and repeated hearings. In fact a very good way of studying Beethoven is to hear some of his works so often and to study them so carefully that they are committed to memory; and made an integral part of your consciousness. Any one of his major works thus absorbed will increase one's spiritual stature.

### III

## THE EARLY ROMANTIC COMPOSERS

### THE BIRTH OF ROMANTICISM

**R**OMANTICISM is the term somewhat loosely applied to the artistic productions of the first half or three quarters of the nineteenth century. The word "romance" had its origin in the fanciful and miraculous tales of chivalry that were current during the mediæval period, of which the "Romance of the Rose," translated by Chaucer, is a familiar example. Its origin carries the suggestion of the remote, the strange, the fantastic, the fictitious, the supernatural, and the magic beauty of other worlds. It is directly opposite to "classicism" in meaning and connotation. The term "classic" is applied to the ancient Greek period when the art products were of severe, restrained beauty, when beauty of form transcended veracity and variety of expression, when calmness and poise were the desiderata.

The Romantic period of art corresponds

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exactly to the magnificent quickening and enlargement of the human spirit that took place during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in all fields of endeavor: in politics, science, invention, industry, commerce, and transportation. The magnificent discoveries of the eighteenth century, its Renaissance of learning, its glorious efflorescence of painting and architecture, its vivid intellectual awakening and the solution of many of the innumerable political problems of Europe; all had prepared the way for the sudden blossoming that has been termed the Romantic period. It was really the onrush of the adolescent period of the human spirit, when intellect and emotions were agreeably united.

The human spirit suddenly discovered that external Nature,—the forests, rivers, oceans, and mountains,—that the events of the ancient, mediæval, and present ages; that all its subtle reactions to every conceivable impression were proper material for artistic expression. The world was intoxicated and delirious with its newly discovered riches and powers. In literature we find Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Shelley, Keats, Jean Paul Richter, Novalis, Chamisso, Victor Hugo, and many others striking the Romantic note. Writers turned to the mediæval period for material, to old tales of

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the supernatural, to the wealth of chivalrous adventures.

Composers as well sought much of their inspiration in the ancient folklore, fairy tales, and supernatural incidents. All restrictions had been removed from the imaginations of composers, everything was grist to the mill; the supernatural, the bizarre, the foreign, the remote, and the exotic elements were all seized upon as trophies for the Sovereign Queen of Beauty.

Romantic subjects occurred occasionally in the works of the classical masters; Haydn had his "*Gypsy Rondo*," Mozart his "*Rondo alla Turca*," Beethoven his "*Turkish March*" and "*Dance of the Whirling Dervishes*," a composition that would have done credit to Berlioz himself. Even Bach left unfinished violin works on Hungarian melodies. Bach's organ "*Fantasie in G Minor*" contains passages embodying the essence of the improvisations of the Hungarian cembalists. Such examples, however, are isolated and do not present the feeling of the age.

The difference between the classical and romantic can hardly be better illustrated than by comparing the choruses of Egyptian priests in Mozart's "*The Magic Flute*," stately German religious music, with the temple music of



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Verdi's "*Aïda*," glowing with sensuous charm, achieved by diminished thirds and harp accompaniment.

Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Von Weber, and Chopin opened wide the doors of a new world of beauty in music. The sensuous elements of musical art were transformed to a luscious sweetness; color effects of the most dazzling designs were incorporated, and the rigid structures of the classical sonata form were broken down and more flexible forms evolved. It is true that in this latter respect considerable loss was entailed, for often the musical forms of Schubert, Schumann, and Berlioz were struggling and inchoate, but this was compensated for by the freshness of the melodic phrase, the originality of rhythm, the novelty of the color effects, and increased power of graphic delineation.

Musical speech became more an intimately personal revelation; indeed sometimes genuine personal confessions of hopes and despairs, of loves and disappointments, of friendship and quarrels. In Chopin's piano works we find the whole story of his spirit; they constitute an amazing revelation of a pain-racked soul, exquisitely sensitive to the finer nuances of beauty. Schubert also gives us his reactions to the most particular incidents and objects, and Schumann

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in his "*Carnaval*" dramatizes his personal feeling towards his most intimate friends. Mendelssohn paints with unerring fidelity his impression of natural landscapes and phenomena and writes his confessions in his "*Songs Without Words*."

## FRANZ SCHUBERT

The events of Schubert's life have been recounted in another volume.<sup>7</sup> Here we shall consider only his symphonic works. Schubert was an incurable lyricist, and temperamentally ill suited to extended composition demanding a sober, comprehensive planning of large design, and a careful unfoldment of thematic material. His moods were quick, intense, and short-winded, often exquisitely poetical, but too transient to permit their service in works of larger compass. Hence we find Schubert often patching together a succession of melodies, organically unrelated, which are repeated to the point of tedium, or which are treated in the most inept manner.

His first six symphonies are merely exercises, pathetically reminiscent of Mozart and Haydn

<sup>7</sup> See Volume iii, "The Art Song and Its Composers."

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who were his first models. Schubert, in his early years, was not sympathetic towards Beethoven and thereby lost much valuable time when he might have been absorbing this sterner and more inspiring influence. His early symphonies are magnified songs, full of Romantic personal feeling, sensuously appealing, and reveling in gorgeous coloring.

His faults arose from his manner of writing, for he was hopelessly careless, easy-going, and undisciplined. He wrote music as a girl would write love-letters, utterly at the mercy of chance suggestion or passing mood. He did not really compose in the sense we think of Beethoven, rather he improvised on paper as Beethoven did on the instrument. A charming spontaneity resulted, but with it came also diffusiveness and monotonous and vain repetition. A certain rhythm would hypnotize him and page after page he would cling to it, riding it to death. Again a pleasing phrase would receive the same treatment, so that often we find five phrases of repetition to one of real development.

In Schubert's longer works "lovely melodies follow each other, but nothing comes of them," states H. H. Statham, an English critic. Even in the lively coda of the Finale of the "*C Major Symphony*," he takes the easier course and re-

## THE "UNFINISHED" SYMPHONY

peats identical phrases in higher and higher pitch. But in his "*C Major Symphony*" and the famous "*Unfinished*" we observe a totally different atmosphere. Here we find a maturity, an incisiveness, a carefulness of treatment, and impassioned eloquence and an inspired beauty that has lifted them to the plane of immortality.

### THE "UNFINISHED" SYMPHONY, NO. 8, IN B MINOR

1. Allegro moderato
2. Andante con moto

Only two movements of this beautiful symphony are complete. Nine bars of a scherzo follow and then the symphony suddenly stops. The remainder has never been found and no one knows why Schubert should have abandoned it. Not until forty-five years after it had been written was it discovered by Sir George Grove and given to the world. The first page of the score is marked "Vienna, October 30, 1822." It was published in 1861 and the first performance was given at the Crystal Palace, London, in April of the same year. It met with instant favor and has retained its

## THE EARLY ROMANTIC COMPOSERS

great popularity with the public ever since. What we have of it represents among symphonic works one of the most beautiful in idea and perfect in form ever written.

Solemn and foreboding is the mysterious opening theme, carried by the 'cellos and basses. It seems to promise a journey into the supernatural world. Then enters one of the most exquisite themes ever conceived by the human imagination, a melody which once heard haunts one forever. Enrapturing, too, is its undulating, irresistible rhythm. A pause, and then comes its passionate declaration in the minor as though the dream of bliss had been shattered and a bitter skeptical remembrance derides the reality of its occurrence. But the beautiful theme reappears, followed by a struggle between the moods of perfect happiness and seething passion. The second part opens with a varied treatment of the first subject, magnificently developed with full orchestra up to a powerful climax. Again the first theme enters charmingly and is again tossed about in powerful orchestral tornado.

The Andante is equally lovely, full of a soft, subdued beauty, poignantly sad and wistful. It is steeped in the languorous richness of amorous pensiveness, in the dreamy reminiscences of love's ecstasies.

## SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN C MAJOR

### SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN C MAJOR

1. Andante, Allegro ma non troppo
2. Andante, con moto
3. Scherzo, Allegro vivace
4. Finale, Allegro vivace

This symphony is literally Schubert's swan song, for it was begun in March, 1828, and was finished on November 19 of the year of his death. On the twelfth of December it was produced in Vienna, repeated in March ensuing and then forgotten until 1838, when Schumann, visiting Vienna, discovered it, rescued and took it back to Leipsic. There he showed it to Mendelssohn, then conducting the Gewandhaus concerts. Together the two studied it and had it performed on March 27, 1839. The work is of great length, but rich in lovely melodies and all the glowing tonal painting that affords full display of the orchestra's rich resources. The Finale is exceptionally vigorous and impetuous in spirit.

### FELIX BARTHOLDY-MENDELSSOHN

Felix Mendelssohn, born in Hamburg in 1809, died in 1847, was the grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, and the son

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of a rich banker. Both he and his sister Fanny were gifted musicians and were ardently devoted to each other. At nine he played in public for the first time. At his home he conducted an orchestra and staged little operas which he had composed. There he was surrounded by an intimate circle of admiring friends, responsive to his every whim. At his home gathered philosophers, scholars, musicians, and artists.

Mendelssohn studied water-color sketching, developed considerable skill in letter-writing, indulged in sports, bowling, fencing, and swimming, and traveled extensively in Italy and Switzerland. His great service in resurrecting Bach has been mentioned. In 1829 he visited England, where he took the country by storm. His suavity, assurance, charm of manners, and gravity of deportment pleased the English immensely. In 1835 he was appointed conductor of the Gewandhaus orchestra concerts in Leipzig and in 1843 he founded the famous Leipsic Conservatory.

Mendelssohn became the pet of a large and indulgent circle. His fame as composer, conductor, pianist, and organist grew by leaps and bounds. Wherever he went success, recognition, and adulation greeted him. A wit once said of him: "Mendelssohn could not stick his head out of the window but some one would



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shout 'Hurrah.' " Under such conditions Mendelssohn could not resist a growing tendency towards self-absorption, smugness, irritation at criticism, and lack of sympathy with all who failed to worship at his shrine. His disparaging treatment of Schumann was typical of his attitude towards much that was new and original. In his later works we can detect signs of an increasing robustness and manliness, but before the transformation was completed, the blow of his sister's death in 1847 unnerved him. He survived the shock only a few months.

The wealth of his parents gave Mendelssohn at an early age a command of time and distance, and opportunity to visit foreign lands, an acquaintance with eminent personages, and a knowledge of art and literature that were vouchsafed to but very few musicians. But all these advantages tended to transform the agile-minded young musician into a disinterested spectator, rather than an impassioned actor. This, combined with his natural temperament, conspired to infect his works with a certain lukewarmness, a thin-bloodedness, and an excessive suavity which are not greatly relished by us moderns. Here are no turgid, choking emotions, no wrenching despairs, no thwarted hopes, nothing but ease, grace, and

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nimbleness. Fed on harmony, counterpoint, and fugue from childhood up, Mendelssohn early acquired a fluency of writing that rivaled even the ease of Mozart, and finally largely defeated its own ends. For an excessive ease of expression too often tempts a man to emphasize technic at the expense of expression.

But without this selfsame ease of expression, this delicacy of temperament, and this unerring taste we should have had no Ariel in music, for just those conditions mentioned were necessary, otherwise this exquisite spirit would have been smothered under crushing adversities. In the scherzo of the octet written at sixteen there are all the Mendelssohnian traits: fluent melodiousness, correct harmony, carefully polished detail, and an inimitable delicacy, finesse, and lightness of style. The same effects are reproduced in the ethereal musical tissue of the "*Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*." Here the violins delicately whisper and pick out the measures of the dainty dance of the fairies and elves, while the trumpets and woodwinds breathe out the rare freshness of fairy woodlands.

The "*Hebrides Overture*" transports us in a flash to a distant island set in an immense expanse of ocean, where in profound solitude we watch the rhythmic swell and ebb of great

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billows, feel the searching fingers of the long-limbed ocean wind, listen to the shrill cries of sea gulls darting past, and observe the ghostly procession of giant clouds stalk along the horizon. In the "*Italian Symphony*" another canvas is unrolled before our eyes, a panorama dominated by the solemn procession of marching pilgrims. For Mendelssohn, who was also a clever water-color artist, painted in tone all the wealth of detail that his exquisite sensibilities drank in from the world of external Nature. The same is true of the "*Scotch Symphony*." It is only in the orchestral accompaniment for his mightiest work, "*Elijah*," that his writing affords us the feeling of genuine vigor and ruggedness.

"In the matter of orchestration," states Mason, "his delicate ear and fine taste made him a great master. His instinct for proper balance and fusion of timbres is unerring, he knows how to be sonorous without becoming opaque or blatant, and his scores abound in the purest, clearest, and freshest colors. Where shall we find a parallel for that ethereal shimmer of the violins in the '*Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*,' or for the magical chords of the woodwind that arrest it? or for the serene beauty of the violin melody, so airily poised, at the end of the same overture?"

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or for the liquid coolness of the flutes, violins, and trumpets in the '*Hebrides*'? or for the elastic vitality of the violins at the opening of the '*Italian Symphony*'? Here, we cry with delight, is a master who can make flutes and clarinets and violins in their upper register, and trumpets playing *piano*, sound not like mere orchestral instruments, but like angelic voices in remote skies. This magical charm is largely due to the limpid transparency of his coloring. He never overscores, never surfeits the ear and confuses the mind by laying on the tints too thickly or piling up colors that will not coalesce. Few composers have so fully realized how little an effect is due to the mere qualities of the sounds, but much to their skillful composition."<sup>8</sup>

Mendelssohn makes an inimitable appeal to the phantasy; no other writer has been able to conjure up so delicately the magic realm of fairies and elves, or suggest so vividly the world of disembodied joy and innocent merry-making. Invaluable is the service he has performed in revealing to us this delicious nook in the realm of our imagination. He wrote five symphonies, various overtures, and scenic music for "Antigone" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Gregory Mason, "The Romantic Composers."

## ROBERT SCHUMANN

Mendelssohn in his day had a large tribe of slavish imitators, most of whose works are neglected and forgotten. Some of his most prominent associates and disciples, however, deserve notice: Ferdinand Hiller, a prolific composer, a fine pianist, conductor, and interpreter of Beethoven's works; Julius Rietz, who succeeded Mendelssohn as conductor of the Gewandhaus, and edited the latter's and Beethoven's symphonies; and Sterndale Bennett, one of England's greatest composers, who was a cherished friend of Mendelssohn. The Dane Gåde was also intimately associated with Mendelssohn.

## ROBERT SCHUMANN

Robert Alexander Schumann was born in Zwickau, Saxony, June 8, 1810. His grandfather was a Protestant pastor and his father a librarian. Schumann commenced to study the piano at the age of nine, and at the same time he read Byron, Heine, and the other Romantic writers of the day, and imitated them in love ballads and blood-curdling melodramas. The idol of his heart was Jean Paul Richter, that curious mixture of sentimentality, boldness of imagination, and eccentric humor, whom he wished all to read so that

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they might become "better and more unhappy."

In 1826 his father died and to please his mother he enrolled as a law student in the University of Leipsic. Here he studied philosophy as well, reading Kant, Schelling, Fichte, wrote verses, and learned how to fence. Here Schumann met the pianist Friedrich Wieck and his daughter Clara, who at the age of six was already a prodigy. Schumann continued his piano work, composed, and studied Bach indefatigably.

After a tour through Germany and northern Italy he established himself in Heidelberg to resume his law studies, still continuing, however, his piano studies. He commenced to be known as a player and composed a few of his "*Palillions*." In 1830, at the age of twenty, a concert given by Paganini crystallized once and for all his determination to make music his real vocation. He finally persuaded his mother to permit him to give up law for music. Returning to Leipsic he placed himself under Wieck to direct his piano study. In his anxiety to improve his technic and conquer the obdurate fourth finger he contrived a device which resulted in permanently laming his hand, and was forced to abandon all hopes of becoming a prodigy. Perhaps this was an

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advantage for it compelled him to take up more seriously the study of harmony and counterpoint.

The death of his brother and sister-in-law, threw him into the profoundest melancholy during which the first alarming symptoms of his nervous malady appeared. Little by little he recovered and resumed work. In 1834 he founded the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" to defend the work of the young original composers against the conservatism and atrocious taste of the academic Philistines. Through his journal Schumann was later to call the attention of the musical world to the gifted Chopin and the youthful genius of Johannes Brahms.

In 1854 his best friend, Ludwig Schenke, died, followed by the death of his mother in 1836. Again Schumann was profoundly shocked.

His first piano works, from Opus 1 to 23, written only for the piano, were adjudged too difficult and obscure by the public. Only a few of his intimate friends really appreciated their value. But in 1840 appeared his first songs inspired by his love for Clara Wieck. Their beauty and freshness awakened eager interest among the musical public.

For years Schumann had wished to marry



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Clara Wieck, but the old piano teacher refused to countenance the match. The uncertainty of Schumann's health alarmed him, and moreover Clara's concerts afforded him a liberal income. Schumann completed his work as doctor of philosophy, hoping thus to win the father's confidence, still the latter did not give way; the fact that one of Schumann's sisters died insane further alarmed the father. Finally Schumann took the bit in his teeth, brought the matter into the courts, and forced Wieck to accede to the union, which was not a particularly pleasant course of procedure to Schumann. On September 12, 1840, the marriage took place, and then commenced an affectionate tender union that was maintained until Schumann's death.

Now commenced essays in the symphony and chamber music forms, and in symphonic poems for symphony and voice, as "*Das Paradies und die Peri*," "*Der Rose Pilgerfahrt*," and "*Faust*." In 1845 his health suddenly failed, and he was forced to discontinue all work. Careful nursing restored him but left him with excruciating premonitions. A relapse in 1846 confirmed his gloomy forebodings. To distract his mind he resumed his work with increased fervor, only further to aggravate his condition. He wrote in succession an opera

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"*Genoveva*," performed without great success in London, music for Byron's "*Manfred*," a Mass, and a Requiem.

In December, 1849, Schumann first showed signs of mental irresponsibility. On February 27, 1854, he threw himself, in a fit of madness, into the Rhine, but was pulled out. It was found necessary, however, to place him in close confinement until his death in 1856. The basis of the disease seems to have been a tendency inherited from his mother to an abnormal activity of the brain with a resultant congestion, distention of its blood vessels, and a final ossification of the cerebral tissue, resulting in mental paralysis. This condition was constantly aggravated by worry, overwork, excessive emotionalism, and the fierce concentration of musical composition.

Despite his untimely and horrible malady to which there is attached no moral stigma, one cannot say that Schumann's life was sad and hopeless. Enormous satisfaction must have flowed from the exercise of his creative powers, from the tender love of his devoted wife, the affection of loyal friends, the appreciation of an eager public, and the satisfaction of a high-minded contest for the recognition of the highest ideals in his art.

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When Schumann commenced to compose for the orchestra in 1841 he was greatly handicapped by his early exclusively pianistic training. So constantly had he thought in terms of the piano that he found it practically impossible to grasp the problems of orchestration. Whereas Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven had had an early training and first-hand acquaintance with the orchestra, Schumann had had nothing approximating this. Hence his early attempts were full of blunders, and he never learned to score with ease and precision. Mendelssohn occasionally would set him right in his orchestration.

Schumann early acquired a fatal habit of doubling his instruments, and of using too many instruments at once, thus producing an effect of heaviness and muddiness. His appetite for richness of coloring defeated its end; instead of achieving this, he rendered the tonal mass dense and opaque. Only the sheer merit of his musical ideas, their romantic charm, their freshness of mood, their sincerity and profundity, have enabled his symphonies to live. Despite all these technical shortcomings, they are ranked very high.

Their melodic element is often exquisitely lovely, though not so frequently overworked as in the case of Schubert, but his rhythmic and

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harmonic contributions are surpassingly beautiful and original. Schumann's constant study of Bach gave him a facile command over the resources of fugue, counterpoint, and canon, and often Schumann himself was surprised to catch himself unconsciously casting his musical thoughts into contrapuntal forms. "In my latest composition," he remarks in 1838, "I often hear many things I cannot explain. It is most extraordinary how I write almost everything in canon, and only detect the imitation afterwards and often find inversion, rhythm in contrary motion."

His mastery of counterpoint proved invaluable in the larger works, hence we discover in Schumann a much higher degree of thematic development, coherence of musical thought and climatic effects than in the case of Schubert. Schumann is always poetic, often melancholy, and occasionally morbid and gloomy, and through his works glows a firm, manly spirit, passionately striving for sincere and telling utterance. Schumann, with his profound philosophical penetration, his exquisite sensibilities, his almost feminine tenderness and forbearance, his subtlety and adaptability of imagination was pre-eminently fitted to act as the spokesman of the best element of the Romantic movement, which, with the advent

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of Liszt, Berlioz, and Wagner, was to take a somewhat different turn.

### FIRST SYMPHONY IN B FLAT

1. Andante un poco maestoso, Allegro
2. Larghetto
3. Scherzo (molto vivace)
4. Finale, Adagio animato e grazioso

Of Schumann's five symphonies the first symphony in B flat is the freshest, the most buoyant, and infectious. Schumann intended to call it the "Spring Symphony," but omitted the explanatory titles in publishing the work, because he was afraid that the public's attention would be distracted from the main purpose of the composition. Curiously enough, it was published in February, 1841, when the first breath of spring was in the air. Its basically animating impulse, however, was his profound and heart-felt joy, at last having been united with his hard-won bride.

The first movement was to have been called "Spring's Awakening" and the Finale "Spring's Farewell." Peculiarly appealing do we find many parts of the work when we know its original intent. The beginning of the introduction apparently represents a trumpet-call from

## FIRST SYMPHONY IN B FLAT

on high. Then come the gentle zephyrs softly blowing to and fro and we feel the dormant life forces of Nature slowly disentangling themselves from the clutches of Winter. Then with the Allegro in comes Spring, beautiful and full grown, laughing and frolicking with the lithesome grace of youth. Enchanting is the full-throated "*Spring Song*" which appears at the close of the first movement.

The Larghetto is a simple, sincere song, breathing merriment, good humor, borne along on an undercurrent of deep content. Here is no strife, no altercation, no dramatic recountal of stirring events, nothing but a steady outpouring of exquisite melody. It is a lyric gem.

The Scherzo is dainty, tripping, ebullient with the most tender and delicate joy. Playful coquetry alternates with a trusting, confiding intimacy. Here is some of the most delicate, elusive, and naïve of all music.

The Finale strikes a somewhat more serious note. The first part is still gay and naïvely happy, but toward the last creeps in a note of seriousness, a hint of sadness at the thought that joyous Spring must depart after all. But the final ending is glad, the dominant note of the beginning is recaptured, and the work closes with joyous assurance.

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## REPRESENTATIVE SYMPHONIES

BEETHOVEN, LUDWIG VAN

Symphony No. 1 In C Major

" No. 2 in D

" No. 3 (Eroica) in E Flat

" No. 4 in B Flat

" No. 5 in C Minor

" No. 6. (Pastoral) in F

" No. 7 in A Major

" No. 8 in F Major

" No. 9 (Choral) in D Minor

MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY, FELIX

Italian Symphony

Scotch Symphony

Midsummer Night's Dream Overture

Hebrides Overture

SCHUBERT, FRANZ PETER

Unfinished Symphony

Symphony in C Major

SCHUMANN, ROBERT ALEXANDER

First Symphony in B Flat

Second Symphony in C Major

Third Symphony (Rhine) in E Flat







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